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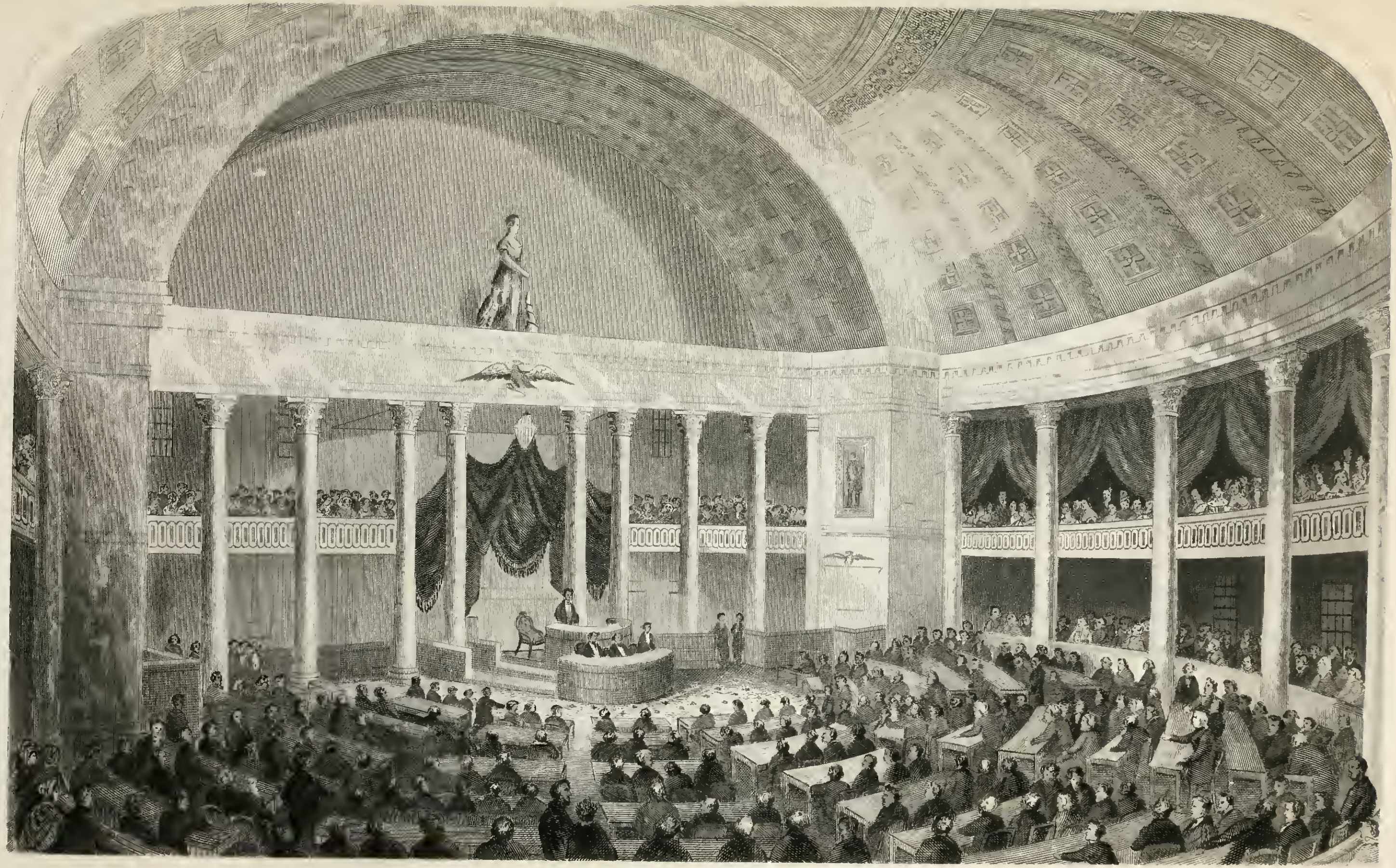

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THE

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UNITED STATES,

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FROM THE PERIOD OF THE UNION OF THE COLONIES AGAINST THE FRENCH,
TO THE INAUGURATION OF WASHINGTON. TOGETHER WITH HISTORICAL
SKETCHES OF THE CONTINENTAL PRESIDENTS, AND AN ACCOUNT
OF THE PUBLIC PROPERTY OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY BENSON J. LOSSING.

ALSO,

THE LIVES OF THE PRESIDENTS,

WITH THE ACTS OF THEIR ADMINISTRATIONS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

VALUABLE HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL DOCUMENTS.

BY EDWIN WILLIAMS.

ANNUIT COEPTIS.
MDCCLXXVI
NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM.

Illustrated with numerous Portraits and Views of Public National Buildings.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

NEW YORK:
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CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

PAGE.
Biographical Sketch of George Washington, ... 9
Administration of " " 65
Farewell Address of " " 81
Biographical Sketch of John Adams, ... 93
Administration of " " 101
Biographical Sketch of Thomas Jefferson, ... 113
Administration of " " 123
Biographical Sketch of James Madison, ... 173
Administration of " " 179
Biographical Sketch of James Monroe, ... 223
Administration of " " 231
Biographical Sketch of John Quincy Adams, ... 255
Administration of " " 267
Biographical Sketch of Andrew Jackson, ... 291
Administration of " " 315
Biographical Sketch of Martin Van Buren, ... 385
Administration of " " 401
Biographical Sketch of William Henry Harrison, ... 417
Biographical Sketch of John Tyler, ... 445
Administration of " " 462
Biographical Sketch of James K. Polk, ... 501
Administration of " " 511
Biographical Sketch of Zachary Taylor, ... 531
Administration of " " 569
Biographical Sketch of Millard Fillmore, ... 595
Administration of " " 605
Biographical Sketch of Franklin Pierce, ... 627
Inauguration of " " 652

ILLUSTRATIONS OF VOLUME II.

The Interior of the U. S. House of Representatives—Frontispiece.

PAGE.

Portrait of President Washington,........................... 9

Do. do. John Adams,........................... 93

Do. do. Jefferson,...........................113

Do. do. Madison,...........................173

Do. do. Monroe,...........................223

Do. do. John Q. Adams,...........................255

Do. do. Jackson,...........................291

Do. do. Van Buren,...........................385

Do. do. Harrison,...........................417

Do. do. Tyler,...........................445

Do. do. Polk,...........................501

Do. do. Taylor,...........................531

Do. do. Fillmore,...........................595

Do. do. Pierce,...........................627

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

THE family of Washington, in Virginia, is descended from English ancestors, who were anciently established at Turtfield and Warton, in Lancashire, from a branch of whom came Sir William Washington, of Leicestershire, eldest son and heir of Lawrence Washington, Esq., of Sulgrave in Northamptonshire. Sir William had, besides other younger brothers, two, named John and Lawrence, who emigrated to Virginia in 1657, and settled at Bridge's creek, on the Potomac river, in the county of Westmoreland. John, the father of Lawrence Washington, died in 1697, leaving two sons, John and Augustine. Augustine died in 1743, at the age of forty-nine, leaving several sons by his two marriages. George, the president, was the eldest by his second wife, Mary Ball, and was born at Bridge's creek, on the 22d (or 11th, old style) of February, 1732.

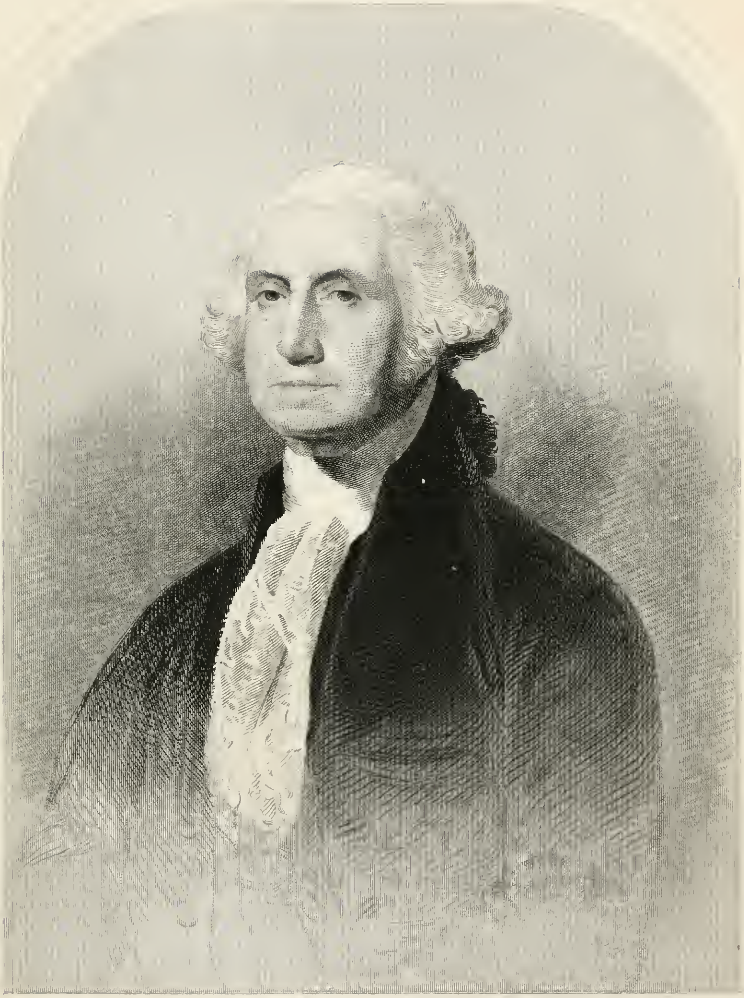
Each of the sons of Augustine Washington inherited from him a separate plantation. To the eldest, Lawrence, he bequeathed the estate on the Potomac river, afterward called Mount Vernon, which then consisted of twenty-five hundred acres, and also other lands and property. The second son, Augustine, received an estate in Westmoreland. To George were left the lands and mansion where his father lived at the time of his disease, situated in Stafford county, on the east side of the Rappahannock river, opposite Fredericksburg ; and to each of the other four sons an estate of six or seven hundred acres. The youngest daughter died in infancy, and for the only remaining one a suitable provision was made in the will. Thus, it will be seen, that Augustine Washington left all his children in a state of comparative independence. His occupation had been that of a planter, and the large estates he was enabled to leave his family had been acquired chiefly by his own industry and enterprise.

Left a widow, with the charge of five young children, the eldest of whom was eleven years of age, Mrs. Washington, the mother of George, exhibited her resources of mind in the superintendence of their education and the management of the complicated affairs of her deceased husband, who by his will had directed that the proceeds of all the property of her children should be at her disposal until they should respectively come of age. This excellent woman had the happiness to see all her children come forward with a fair promise into life, filling the sphere allotted to them with equal honor to themselves and to the parent who had been the only guide of their principles, conduct, and habits. She lived to witness the noble career of her eldest son, till he was raised to the head of a nation, and applauded and revered by the world. Her death took place at the age of eighty-two, at her residence in Fredericsburg, Virginia, August 25, 1789.

Under the colonial governments, particularly in those of the south, the means of education were limited. Those young men who were destined for the learned professions were occasionally sent to England, when their parents were sufficiently wealthy to bear the expenses; while the planters generally were satisfied with such a home education for their sons as would fit them for the duties of practical life, by means of a private tutor, or a teacher of the common schools then in existence. The simplest elements of knowledge only, such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and keeping accounts, were taught at schools of this description, to one of which George Washington was sent, and to such slender advantages was he indebted for all the aids his mind received in his juvenile years.

While at school he was noted for an inquisitive, docile, and diligent disposition, but displaying military propensities and passion for active sports. He formed his playmates into companies, who paraded, marched, and fought mimic battles, in which he was always the commander of one of the parties. He had also a fondness for running, jumping, wrestling, and other active sports and feats of agility.

His early proficiency in some branches of study is shown by his manuscript schoolbooks, which, from the time he was thirteen years old, have been preserved. These books begin with geometry, and he had already become familiar with arithmetic in the most difficult parts. Many pages of the manuscript in question are filled with what he calls *Forms of writing*, such as notes of hand, bills of exchange, bonds, land-warrants, leases, deeds, and wills, written out with care, and in a clerk's hand. Then follow selections in poetry of a moral and religious cast, and *Rules of Behavior in Company and Conversation*, which code of rules it is believed had an influence upon his whole life. Of an ardent temperament and strong passions, it was his constant effort and ultimate triumph, through the varied scenes of his eventful life, to check the one and subdue the other. His intercourse with men, private and public, in every walk and station, was marked with a consistency, a fitness to occasions, a dignity, decorum, condescension, and mildness, which were at once the dictates of his own good sense and judgment, and the fruits of unwearied discipline.



G. Washington

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The last two years which he passed at school were devoted to the study of geometry, trigonometry, and surveying, for which he had a decided partiality. He thus qualified himself for his subsequent profession as a surveyor, in the practice of which he had an opportunity of acquiring information respecting vacant lands, and of forming those opinions concerning their future value which afterward greatly contributed to increase his private fortune. Except the above branches of the mathematics, his acquirements did not extend beyond the subjects usually taught to boys of his age at the common schools. It is even doubtful whether he received any instructions in the principles of language. By practice, reading, and study in after-life, he gradually overcame his early defects in composition till at length he wrote with accuracy, purity of idiom, and a striking appropriateness of phraseology and clearness of style. No aid was derived from any other than his native tongue. He never even commenced the study of the ancient classics. While in the army, after the French officers had joined the Americans, he bestowed some attention on the French language, but at no time could he write or converse in it, or indeed translate any paper.*

In the year 1746, while he was yet at school, a midshipman's warrant was obtained for him in the British army, by his eldest brother, Lawrence, who had been an officer in the British service, and served at the siege of Carthagena and in the West Indies. George, who was then fourteen years of age, was desirous thus early of embracing the opportunity presented for a naval life, but the interference of an affectionate mother deferred the commencement and changed the course of his military career.

Soon after leaving school, in his sixteenth year, he went to reside with his brother Lawrence, at his seat on the Potomac river, which had been called Mount Vernon, in compliment to the admiral of that name. The winter passed in the study of mathematics and in the exercise of practical surveying. At this time he was introduced to Lord Fairfax, and other members of the Fairfax family, established in that part of Virginia. With this family, his brother Lawrence was connected by marriage, and to his intimate acquaintance with them was George Washington mainly indebted for the opportunities of performing those acts which laid the foundation of his subsequent successes and advancement.

Lord Fairfax was possessed of large tracts of wild lands in the valleys of the Allegany mountains, which had not been surveyed ; and so favorable an opinion had he formed of the abilities and attainments of young Washington, that he intrusted to him the responsible service of surveying and laying out the lands in question. He set off on this surveying expedition soon after he had attained his sixteenth year, accompanied by George Fairfax, a young man who was a relative of Lord Fairfax. The enterprise was arduous, and attended with privations and fatigues, but the task was executed in such a manner as to give satisfaction to his employer, and establish his reputation as a surveyor. Having received a commission or appointment as a public surveyor, he devoted three years to this pursuit, which at that time was lucrative and important.

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* Sparks's Life of Washington.

At the age of nineteen he was appointed one of the adjutant-generals of Virginia, with the rank of major. His military propensities had increased with his years, and he prepared himself by the study of books on the military art and by the manual exercise for the life of a soldier. But he had scarcely engaged in this service, when he was called upon to accompany his brother Lawrence on a voyage to the West Indies for his health. They sailed for Barbadoes in September, 1751, and soon after landing on that island, George was seized with the smallpox. The disease was severe, but with good medical attendance he was able to go abroad in three weeks. Leaving his brother Lawrence to embark for Bermuda, he returned to Virginia in February, having been absent over four months. His brother soon followed him, without recovering his health, and died the following summer. Large estates were left by the deceased brother to the care and management of George, who was appointed one of the executors, with a contingent interest in the estate of Mount Vernon and other lands. But his private employments did not prevent his attention to his public duties as adjutant-general, the sphere of which office was enlarged by new arrangements.

The plan formed by France for connecting her extensive dominions in America, by uniting Canada with Louisiana, now began to develop itself. Possession was taken by the French of a tract of country then deemed to be within the province of Virginia, and a line of posts was commenced from Canada to the Ohio river. The attention of Lieutenant-Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia, was attracted by these movements, and he deemed it his duty to send a messenger to the French officers and demand, in the name of the king of Great Britain, that they should desist from the prosecution of designs which violated, as he thought, the treaties between the two crowns. Washington, at his own desire, was selected for this hazardous enterprise, and he engaged in it with alacrity, commencing his journey the day on which he was commissioned, in October, 1753. His course was through a dreary wilderness, inhabited for the most part only by Indians, many of whom were hostile to the English. Conducted by guides over the Allegany mountains, he suffered many hardships, and experienced many narrow escapes, but succeeded in reaching the French forts on the Allegany branches of the Ohio. After delivering the lieutenant-governor's letter to St. Pierre, the French commanding officer, and receiving an answer, he returned, with infinite fatigue and much danger, from the hostile Indians, to Williamsburg. The manner in which he performed his duty on this occasion raised him much in public opinion, as well as in that of the lieutenant-governor. His journal, which extended to sixty days, was published by authority, and laid the foundation of Washington's fame, as it gave strong evidence of his sagacity, fortitude, and sound judgment.

As the French commandant on the Ohio showed no disposition, in his answer sent by Washington, to withdraw his forces from that country, the assembly of Virginia determined to authorize the governor and council to raise a regiment of three hundred men, to be sent to the frontier, for the purpose of maintaining the rights of Great Britain to the territory invaded by the French. The command of this regiment was given to Colonel Fry. Major Washington was appointed lieutenant-colonel, and obtained permission to march with two companies in advance of the other troops to the Great Meadows. In a dark rainy night, May 28, 1754, Colonel Washington surrounded and surprised a detachment of the French troops, a few miles west of the Great Meadows. The Americans fired about daybreak upon the French, who immediately surrendered. One man only escaped, and the commanding officer of the party, M. de Jumonville, and ten of his men were killed. Being soon after joined by the residue of the regiment, also by two companies of regulars, and Colonel Fry having died, the command devolved on Colonel Washington. This body of men, numbering less than four hundred, were, in the following month of July, attacked by about fifteen hundred French and Indians, at Fort Necessity, situated at the Great Meadows, and after a contest which lasted a whole day, the French offered terms of capitulation, and articles were signed, by which the fort was surrendered, and the garrison allowed the honors of war, and permitted to return unmolested into the inhabited parts of Virginia. Great credit was given to Colonel Washington by his countrymen, for the courage displayed on this occasion, and the legislature were so satisfied with the conduct of the party as to vote their thanks to him and the officers under his command. They also ordered three hundred pistoles to be distributed among the soldiers, as a reward for their bravery.

Soon after this campaign, Washington retired from the militia service, in consequence of an order from the war department in England, which put those of the same military rank in the royal army over the heads of those in the provincial forces. This order created great dissatisfaction in the colonies, and Washington, while refusing to submit to the degradation required, declared that he would serve with pleasure when he should be enabled to do so without dishonor.

The unfortunate expedition of General Braddock followed in 1755. The general, being informed of the merit of Washington, invited him to enter into his family as a volunteer and aid-de-camp. This invitation Colonel Washington accepted, as he was desirous to make one campaign under an officer supposed to possess some knowledge in the art of war. The disastrous result of Braddock's expedition is well known. In the battle of the Monongahela, in which General Braddock was killed, Washington had two horses shot under him, and four balls passed through his coat, as his duty and situation exposed him to every danger. Such was the general confidence in his talents, that he may be said to have conducted the retreat.

Soon after his return to his home at Mount Vernon, Colonel Washington was appointed by the legislature of the colony, commander-in-chief of all the forces raised and to be raised in Virginia, which appointment he accepted, and for about three years devoted his time to recruiting and organizing troops for the defence of the colony. In the course of his duties in this service, he had occasion to visit Boston on business with General Shirley, who was then the British commander-in-chief in America. This journey of five hundred miles, Washington, accompanied by his aid and another officer, performed on horseback in the winter of 1756. He stopped several days in the principal cities on the route, where his military character and services in the late campaign procured for him much notice.

While in New York he was entertained at the house of Mr. Beverly Robinson, between whom and himself an intimacy subsisted till it was broken off by their opposite fortune twenty years afterward in the revolution. The sister of Mrs. Robinson, Miss Mary Phillips, was an inmate of the family, and being a young lady of rare accomplishments, her charms made a deep impression upon the heart of the Virginia colonel. He imparted his secret to a confidential friend whose letters kept him informed of every important event. He soon learned that a rival was in the field, and was advised to renew his visits; but he never saw the lady again, till she was married to that same rival, Captain Morris, his former associate in arms, and one of Braddock's aids-de-camp.*

In 1758, Colonel Washington commanded an expedition to Fort Du Quesne, which terminated successfully, and the French retired from the western frontier. By gaining possession of the Ohio the great object of the war in the middle colonies was accomplished, and having abandoned the idea he had entertained of making an attempt to be united to the British establishment, he resigned his commission in the colonial service, in December, 1758, after having been actively engaged in the service of his country more than five years.

Having paid his addresses successfully the preceding year to Mrs. Martha Custis, Colonel Washington was married to that lady on the sixth of January, 1759. She was three months younger than himself, and was the widow of John Parke Custis, and daughter of John Dandridge. Distinguished alike for her beauty, accomplishments, and wealth, she was possessed also of those qualities which adorn the female character, and contribute to render domestic life attractive and happy. Mr. Custis, her first husband, had left large landed estates, and forty-five thousand pounds sterling in money. One third of this property his widow held in her own right, the other two thirds being equally divided between her, a son, and daughter, the former six years old, the latter four, at the time of her second marriage.

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* Sparks's Life of Washington.

An accession of more than one hundred thousand dollars was made to Colonel Washington's fortune by his marriage, in addition to what he already possessed in the estate of Mount Vernon, and other lands which he had selected during his surveying expeditions, and obtained at different times. His extensive private affairs now required his constant attention. He was also guardian to the two children of Mrs. Washington, and this trust he discharged with all the care of a father, till the son became of age, and the daughter died in her nineteenth year. This union was in every respect felicitious, and continued forty years; the lady surviving her distinguished husband, only about eighteen months. To her intimate acquaintances, and to the nation, the character of Mrs. Washington was ever a theme of praise. Affable, courteous, and charitable, exemplary in her deportment; unostentatious and without vanity, she was much esteemed in private life, and filled with dignity every station in which she was placed.*

To the delightful retreat of Mount Vernon, the late commander of the Virginia forces, released from the cares of a military life, and in possession of everything that could make life agreeable, withdrew, three months after his marriage and gave himself up to domestic pursuits. These were conducted with so much judgment, steadiness, and industry, as greatly to enlarge and improve his estate. He had a great fondness for agricultural pursuits, and in all the scenes of his public career, there was no subject upon which his mind dwelt with so lively an interest as on that of agriculture. The staple product of Virginia, particularly in the lower counties, was tobacco, to the culture of which Washington chiefly directed his care. This he exported to England for a market, importing thence, as was then the practice of the Virginia planters, implements of agriculture, wearing apparel, and most other articles of common family use. For the study of English literature he had a decided taste, and his name is frequently to be found as subscriber to such works as were published in the colonies.

The enjoyments of private life at Mount Vernon, and the exercise of a generous hospitality at that mansion, continued uninterrupted for a period of about fifteen years; with the exception of his absence from home during the session of the Virginia legislature, to the house of burgesses of which colony Washington was first elected a representative from the county of Frederic, during his last military campaign, without his personal solicitation or influence. He took his seat in that body at Williamsburg in 1759, and from that time till the beginning of the revolution, a period of fifteen years, he was constantly a member of the house of burgesses, being returned by a majority of votes at every election. For seven years he represented jointly with another delegate the county of Frederic, and afterward the county of Fairfax, in which he resided. There were commonly two sessions in a year, and sometimes three. He gave his attendance punctually and from the beginning to the end of almost every session.

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* Sparks.

His influence in public bodies was produced more by the soundness of his judgment, his quick perceptions, and his directness and sincerity, than by eloquence or art. He seldom spoke, never harangued, and it is not known that he ever made a set speech, or entered into a stormy debate. But his attention was at all times awake, and he was ever ready to act with decision and firmness. His practice may be inferred by the following counsel. In a letter to a nephew, who had been chosen and taken his seat as a member of the assembly, he says: "The only advice I will offer, if you have a mind to command the attention of the house, is to speak seldom, but on important subjects, except such as properly relate to your constituents, and in the former case make yourself perfectly master of the subject. Never exceed a decent warmth, and submit your sentiments with diffidence. A dictatorial style, though it may carry conviction, is always accompanied with disgust."

In the Virginia legislature, Washington acquitted himself with reputation, and gained no inconsiderable knowledge of the science of civil government. During this period the clashing claims of Great Britain and her colonies were frequently brought before the colonial assembly. In every instance he took a decided part in the opposition made to the principle of taxation claimed by the mother-country, and went heart and hand with Henry, Randolph, Lee, Wythe, and the other prominent leaders of the time. His disapprobation of the stamp-act was expressed in unqualified terms. He spoke of it in a letter written at the time, as an "unconstitutional method of taxation," and "a direful attack on the liberties of the colonists." And subsequently he said: "The repeal of the stamp-act, to whatever cause owing, ought much to be rejoiced at. All, therefore, who were instrumental in procuring the repeal, are entitled to the thanks of every British subject, and have mine cordially." He was present in the Virginia legislature, when Patrick Henry offered his celebrated resolutions on this subject, and from his well-known sentiments expressed on other occasions, it is presumed that Washington concurred with the patriotic party which supported these early movements in favor of colonial rights and liberties.

In the subsequent acts of the people of the colonies in resisting the claims and aggressions of the British government, Washington cordially sympathized, and approved of the most decisive measures proposed in opposition, particularly of the agreements not to import goods from Great Britain. "The northern colonies," he remarks in a letter to George Mason, "it appears, are endeavoring to adopt this scheme. In my opinion, it is a good one, and must be attended with salutary effects, provided it can be carried pretty generally into execution." In these sentiments Mr. Mason concurred, and with a view to bring about a concert of action between Virginia and the northern colonies, he drew up a series of articles in the form of an association. The house of burgesses met in May, 1769, and as Mr. Mason was not a member, Washington took charge of the non-importation agreement paper, which, on being presented by him, after the dissolution of the assembly, was unanimously adopted by the members who assembled in a body at a private house. Every member subscribed his name to it, and it was then printed and distributed in the country for the signatures of the people. Washington was scrupulous in observing this agreement, enjoining his correspondents in London to send him none of the articles enumerated in the agreement of association, unless the offensive acts of parliament should be repealed.

In the autumn of 1770, Washington, accompanied by a friend, visited the western lands of Virginia on the Ohio river, for the purpose of selecting tracts awarded to the officers and soldiers for their services in the French war. Proceeding to Pittsburg on horseback, he there embarked in a canoe, and descended the Ohio river to the Great Kenhawa, a distance of 265 miles. After examining the lands on the latter river and making selections, he returned up the Ohio, and thence to Mount Vernon.

The Virginia assembly, which had been prorogued by the governor, Lord Dunmore, from time to time, until March, 1773, is distinguished as having brought forward the resolves instituting a committee of correspondence, and recommending the same to the legislatures of the other colonies; Washington was present and gave his support to those resolves. At the next session, which took place in May, 1774, the assembly adopted still more decisive measures. The news having reached Williamsburg at the commencement of the session, of the passage of the act of the British parliament for shutting up the port of Boston, the sympathy and patriotic feelings of the burgesses were strongly excited, and they forthwith passed an order deprecating this procedure, and setting apart the first of June to be observed as a day of fasting and prayer to implore the Divine interposition in behalf of the colonies. The governor thereupon dissolved the house the next morning.

The delegates, eighty-nine in number, immediately repaired to the Raleigh tavern, organized themselves into a committee, and drew up and signed an association, among other matters, advising the committee of correspondence to communicate with the committees of the other colonies, on the expediency of appointing deputies to meet in a general correspondence. Although the idea of a congress had been suggested by Doctor Franklin the year before, and proposed by town meetings at Providence (Rhode Island), Boston, and New York, yet this was the first public assembly by which it was formally recommended.

Twenty-five of the Virginia delegates, who had remained in Williamsburg, among whom was Washington, met on the twenty-ninth of May, and issued a circular letter to the people of Virginia, recommending a meeting of deputies from the several counties at Williamsburg, on the first of August, for the purpose of a more full and deliberate discussion. Meetings were accordingly held in the several counties, resolutions were adopted, and delegates appointed to the proposed convention. In Fairfax county, Washington presided as chairman, and was one of a committee to prepare a series of resolves, expressive of the sense of the people. These resolves are twenty-four in number, and were drawn by George Mason; they constitute an able and luminous exposition of the points at issue between Great Britain and the colonies. They are of special interest as containing the opinions of Washington at a critical time, when he was soon to be raised by his countrymen to a station of the highest trust and responsibility.*

In a letter to his friend Bryan Fairfax, dated July 20, 1774, Washington writes as follows:—

"Satisfied, then, that the acts of the British parliament are no longer governed by the principles of justice, that they are trampling upon the valuable rights of Americans, confirmed to them by charter and by the constitution they themselves boast of, and convinced beyond the smallest doubt, that these measures are the result of deliberation, and attempted to be carried into execution by the hand of power, is it a time to trifle, or risk our cause upon petitions, which with difficulty obtain access, and afterward are thrown by with the utmost contempt? Or should we, because heretofore unsuspicious of design, and then unwilling to enter into disputes with the mother-country, go on to bear more, and forbear to enumerate our just causes of complaint? For my own part, I shall not undertake to say where the line between Great Britain and the colonies should be drawn; but I am clearly of opinion that one ought to be drawn, and our rights clearly ascertained. I could wish, I own, that the dispute had been left to posterity to determine, but the crisis is arrived when we must assert our rights, or submit to every imposition that can be heaped upon us, till custom and use shall make us tame and abject slaves."

One of the principal acts of the Virginia convention, which met at Williamsburg on the first of August, 1774, of which body Washington was a member, was to adopt a new association, whose objects were resistance to parliamentary aggressions, by non-intercourse with Great Britain. The convention appointed Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, and Edmund Pendleton, delegates to the first continental Congress, which met at Philadelphia, on the fifth of September. Two of Washington's associates, Mr. Henry and Mr. Pendleton stopped on their way at Mount Vernon, whence they all pursued their journey together and were present at the opening of the Congress. As the debates of that distinguished assembly were never made public, the part performed by each individual can not now be known. In its transactions, however, Washington took an active part, and Mr. Wirt in his life of Patrick Henry relates an anecdote which shows in what estimation he was held by his associate members of Congress. Soon after Patrick Henry returned home, being asked whom he thought the greatest man in Congress, he replied: "If you speak of eloquence, Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina is by far the greatest orator; but if you speak of solid information and sound judgment, Colonel Washington is unquestionably the greatest man on that floor."

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* These resolves are in Washington's writings, vol. ii., appendix, page 488.

Replying to a letter from his friend Captain Mackenzie of the British army, then stationed at Boston, in which that officer spoke of the rebellious conduct of the Bostonians, their military preparations, and their secret aim at independence, Washington wrote, while attending the Congress, giving his sentiments and views on the state of public affairs. The following are extracts:—

"Although you are taught to believe that the people of Massachusetts are rebellious, setting up for independence, and what not; give me leave, my good friend, to tell you that you are abused, grossly abused. Give me leave to add, and I think I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government, or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence; but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges which are essential to the happiness of every free state, and without which, life, liberty, and property, are rendered totally insecure.

"Again, give me leave to add, as my opinion, that more blood will be spilled on this occasion, if the ministry are determined to push matters to extremity, than history has ever yet furnished instances of in the annals of North America, and such a vital wound will be given to the peace of this great country, as time itself can not cure, or eradicate the remembrance of."

What is here said of independence is confirmed by the address of the first Congress to the people of Great Britain. "You have been told that we are seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independency. Be assured that these are not facts, but calumnies." That such were at this time the sentiments of the leaders in America, there can be no reasonable doubt; being accordant with all their public acts and private declarations.

It is not easy to determine at what precise date the idea of independence was first entertained by the principal persons in America. The spirit and form of their institutions led the colonists frequently to act as an independent people, and to set up high claims in regard to their rights and privileges ; but there is no sufficient evidence to prove, that any province, or any number of prominent individuals, entertained serious thoughts of separating entirely from the mother-country, till very near the actual commencement of the war of the revolution.*

While Washington and his principal coadjutors had no confidence in the success of petitions to the king and parliament, and looked forward to the probable appeal to arms, they were still without any other anticipations than by a resolute vindication of their rights to effect a change in the conduct and policy of the British government, and restore the colonies to their former condition.

On returning from Congress to his farm, Colonel Washington was soon interrupted in his private occupations by the calls of his fellow-citizens of Virginia, to assist in organizing military companies for the defence of the colony, and to prepare for the approaching contest with Great Britain. He was consulted as the first military character in Virginia, and it seemed to be the expectation of the people that in the event of a war he would be placed in command of the Virginia forces. Being solicited to act as field-officer in an independent company, he wrote to his brother as follows: "I shall very cheerfully accept the honor of commanding it, if occasion require it to be drawn out, as it is my full intention to devote my life and fortune in the cause we are engaged in, if needful."

Washington was a delegate to the second Virginia convention, which met at Richmond on the 20th of March, 1775, and approved of the proceedings of the continental Congress of 1774. A committee, of which Washington was a member, was appointed, on motion of Patrick Henry, and reported a plan of defence, by embodying, arming, and disciplining the militia. He was also on a committee to devise a plan for the encouragement of domestic arts and manufactures. The people were advised to form societies for that purpose, and the members of the convention agreed that they would use home manufactures in preference to any others, themselves. The former delegates were again chosen by the convention to represent Virginia in the next continental Congress, and Washington with his colleagues repaired to Philadelphia, where that body assembled on the 10th of May, 1775.

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* Among those who from the first seemed, to have a presentiment that reconciliation with Great Britain was out of the question was Patrick Henry. As early as 1773, according to Mr. Wirt, he alluded to the probability of a Declaration of Independence, and predicted that after being assisted by France, Spain, and Holland, "our independence would be established and we should take our stand among the nations of the earth!" Down to the year 1775, however the idea of independence was not generally prevalent or popular among the great mass of the American people. Doctor Timothy Dwight of New Haven, Connecticut, for many years president of Yale college, and for a time a chaplain in the revolutionary army, confirms this statement in his writings. "In the month of July, 1775," he says, "I urged in conversation with several gentlemen of great respectability, firm whigs, and my intimate friends, the importance, and even the necessity, of a declaration of independence on the part of the colonies, and alleged for this measure the very same arguments which afterward were generally considered as decisive ; but found them disposed to give me and my arguments, a hostile and contemptuous, instead of a cordial reception. These gentlemen may be considered as representatives of the great body of the thinking men in this country. A few may perhaps be excepted, but none of those durst at that time openly declare their opinions to the public."
Dwight's Travels, vol. i., page 159.

Hostilities having commenced between Great Britain and the colonies, Congress first proceeded to consider the state of the country and to provide for defence. The military fame and reputation of Washington were universally acknowledged by his countrymen and duly appreciated by his associates in the national councils. He was appointed chairman of the various committees charged with the duty of making arrangements for defence ; including the devising of ways and means, making estimates, and preparing rules and regulations for the government of the army. The forces under the direction of Congress were, on motion of John Adams, called "the continental army."

The selection of a commander-in-chief of the American armies, was a task of great delicacy and difficulty. There were several older officers than Colonel Washington, of experience and reputation, who had claims for the appointment, but it was considered good policy to make the selection from Virginia, and all acknowledged the military accomplishments and other superior qualifications of Washington. The New England delegates were among the foremost to propose and the most zealous to promote the appointment of Colonel Washington. John Adams, one of the Massachusetts delegates, on moving that the army then besieging the British troops in Boston should be adopted by Congress as a continental army, said it was his intention to propose for the office of commander-in-chief, a gentleman from Virginia who was at that time a member of their own body. When the day for the appointment arrived (the fifteenth of June, 1775), the nomination was made by Mr. Thomas Johnson of Maryland. The choice was by ballot, and Colonel Washington was unanimously elected. As soon as the result was ascertained, the house adjourned. On the convening of Congress the next morning, the president communicated to him officially the notice of his appointment, and he rose in his place, and signified his acceptance in the following brief and appropriate reply :—*

"MR. PRESIDENT : Though I am truly sensible of the high honor done me in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks, for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

"But lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that

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* Sparks.

I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with.

"As to pay, sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses; those I doubt not they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

In a letter to his wife, announcing his appointment, dated Philadelphia, June 18, 1775, Washington expressed similar sentiments to the foregoing, as follows:—

"MY DEAREST: I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased, when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised for the defence of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it.

"You may believe me, when I assure you in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might and I suppose did perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures, as would have reflected dishonor upon myself, and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me."

The appointment was made on the 15th of June, four days after which he received his commission from the president of Congress, declaring him commander-in-chief of all the forces then raised, or that should be raised, in the united colonies, or that should voluntarily offer their services for the defence of American liberty. The members of Congress by resolution, unanimously pledged themselves to maintain, assist, and adhere to him with their lives and fortunes, in the same cause. Four major-generals, eight brigadier-generals, and an adjutant-general, were likewise appointed by Congress for the continental army.

On the 21st of June, Gen. Washington hastened from Philadelphia to join the continental army at Cambridge near Boston. He was accompanied by Generals Lee and Schuyler, and escorted by a volunteer troop of light horse which continued with him to New York. On his way he was everywhere received by the people with enthusiasm, and the respect to which his new rank entitled him. The particulars of the battle of Bunker's hill reached him at New York, and increased his anxiety to hasten forward to the army. Leaving Gen. Schuyler in command at New York, Washington again pursued his journey, escorted by volunteer military companies, to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he was met by a committee of the provincial Congress of that colony, which attended him to Cambridge. He arrived at the latter place on the second of July, and took the command of the army the next day.

At this time Gen. Washington found the British intrenched on Bunker's hill, having also three floating batteries in Mystic river, and a twenty-gun ship below the ferry between Boston and Charlestown. They had also a battery on Copp's hill, and were strongly fortified on Boston Neck. The Americans were intrenched at various points so as to form a line of siege around Boston and Charlestown.

The effective force of the American army placed under the command of Washington, amounted to fourteen thousand, five hundred men, raised in the New England colonies.* Several circumstances concurred to render this force very inadequate to active operations. Military stores were deficient in camp, and the whole amount in the country was inconsiderable. Under all these embarrassments, the general observed, that "he had the materials of a good army; that the men were able-bodied, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage." He immediately instituted such arrangements as were calculated to increase their capacity for service. The army was distributed into brigades and divisions, and on his recommendation, general staff-officers were appointed. Economy, union, and system, were introduced into every department. As the troops came into service under the authority of distinct colonial governments, no uniformity existed among the regiments. In Massachusetts, the men had chosen their officers, and (rank excepted) were in other respects, frequently their equals. To form one uniform mass of these discordant materials, and to subject freemen, animated with the spirit of liberty, and collected for its defence, to the control of military discipline, required patience, forbearance, and a spirit of accommodation. This delicate and arduous duty was undertaken by General Washington, and discharged with great address. When he had made considerable progress in disciplining his army, the term for which enlistments had taken place was on the point of expiring. The commander-in-chief made early and forcible representations to Congress on this subject, and urged them to adopt efficient measures for the formation of a new army. They deputed three of their members, Mr. Lynch, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Harrison, to repair to camp, and in conjunction with him and the chief magistrates of the New England colonies, to confer on the most effectual mode of continuing, supporting, and regulating, a continental army. By them it was resolved to enlist 23,722 men, as far as practicable, from the troops before Boston, to serve till the last day of December, 1776, unless sooner discharged by Congress.

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* Several companies of riflemen from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, joined the army at Cambridge in September, having marched from four to seven hundred miles.

In the execution of this resolve, Washington called upon all officers and soldiers to make their election for retiring or continuing. Several of the inferior officers retired. Many of the men would not continue on any terms. Several refused, unless they were indulged with furloughs; others unless they were allowed to choose their officers. So many impediments obstructed the recruiting service, that it required great address to obviate them. Washington made forcible appeals, in general orders, to the pride and patriotism of both officers and men. He promised every indulgence compatible with safety, and every comfort that the state of the country authorized. In general orders of the 20th of October, he observed:—

"The times, and the importance of the great cause we are engaged in, allow no room for hesitation and delay. When life, liberty, and property, are at stake; when our country is in danger of being a melancholy scene of bloodshed and desolation; when our towns are laid in ashes, innocent women and children driven from their peaceful habitations, exposed to the rigors of an inclement season, to depend perhaps on the hand of charity for support; when calamities like these are staring us in the face, and a brutal savage enemy threatens us and everything we hold dear, with destruction from foreign troops; it little becomes the character of a soldier to shrink from danger, and condition for new terms. It is the general's intention to indulge both officers and soldiers who compose the new army with furloughs for a reasonable time; but this must be done in such a manner as not to injure the service, or weaken the army too much at once."

In the instructions given to the recruiting officers, the general enjoined upon them, "not to enlist any person suspected of being unfriendly to the liberties of America, or any abandoned vagabond, to whom all causes and countries are equal and alike indifferent."*

Though great exertions had been made to procure recruits, yet the regiments were not filled. Several causes operated in producing this disinclination to the service. The sufferings of the army had been great; fuel, clothes, and even provisions, had not been furnished them in sufficient quantities; the small-pox deterred many from entering; but the principal reason was a dislike to a military life. Much also of that enthusiasm which brought numbers to the field, on the commencement of hostilities had abated. The army of 1775 was wasting away by the expiration of the terms of service, and recruits for the new, entered slowly.*

Unfortunately, an essential error had been committed in constituting the first military establishment of the Union, the consequences of which ceased only with the war. The soldiers were enlisted for the term of one year, if not sooner discharged by Congress. This fatal error brought the American cause more than once into real hazard.

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* Ramsay.

General Washington had earnestly urged Congress to offer a bounty; but this expedient was not adopted till late in January; and on the last day of December, 1775, when the old army was disbanded, only nine thousand six hundred and fifty men had been enlisted for the army of 1776.

The general viewed with deep mortification the inactivity to which he was compelled to submit. His real difficulties were not generally known; his numbers were exaggerated; his means of acting on the offensive were magnified; the expulsion of the British army from Boston had been long since anticipated by many; and those were not wanting who insinuated that the commander-in-chief was desirous of prolonging the war, in order to continue his own importance.

Congress having manifested dispositions favorable to an attack on Boston, General Washington continued to direct his utmost efforts to that object. In January, 1776, a council of war resolved, "that a vigorous attempt ought to be made on the ministerial troops in Boston, before they can be reinforced in the spring, if the means can be provided, and a favorable opportunity should offer;" and for this purpose that thirteen regiments of militia should be required from Massachusetts and the neighboring colonies. The colonies complied with this requisition; but such was the mildness of the early part of the winter, that the waters continued open, and of course impassable.

Late in February, appearances among the British troops indicated an intention to evacuate Boston. But as these appearances might be deceptive, General Washington determined to prosecute a plan which must force General Howe either to come to an action or abandon the town.

Since the allowance of a bounty, recruiting had been more successful, and the regular force had been augmented to fourteen thousand men. The commander-in-chief had also called to his aid six thousand militia. Thus reinforced, he determined to take possession of the heights of Dorchester and fortify them. As the possession of this post would enable him to annoy the ships in the harbor, and the soldiers in the town of Boston, he was persuaded that a general action would ensue. Should this hope be disappointed, his purpose was to make the works on the heights of Dorchester preparatory to seizing and fortifying other points which commanded the harbor, a great part of the town, and the beach from which an embarkation must take place in the event of a retreat.

To facilitate the execution of this plan, a heavy bombardment and cannonade were commenced on the British lines on the second of March, which were repeated on the succeeding nights. On the east of them a strong detachment, under the command of General Thomas, took possession of the heights, and labored with such persevering activity through the night, that the works were sufficiently advanced by the morning nearly to cover them.

It was necessary to dislodge the Americans or to evacuate the town, and General Howe determined to embrace the former part of the alternative. Three thousand chosen men commanded by Lord Percy embarked, and fell down to the castle, in order to proceed up the river to the intended scene of action, but were scattered by a furious storm. Before they could be again in readiness for the attack, the works were made so strong that the attempt to storm them was thought unadvisable, and the evacuation of the town became inevitable.

This determination was soon known to the Americans. A paper signed by some of the selectmen, and brought out by a flag, communicated the fact. This paper was accompanied by propositions said to be made by General Howe, relative to the security of the town and the peaceable embarkation of his army. The advances of the American troops were discontinued, and considerable detachments were moved toward New York before the actual evacuation of Boston. That event took place on the seventeenth of March, 1776; and in a few days the whole fleet sailed out of Nantasket road, directing its course eastward; immediately after which the American army proceeded by divisions to New York, where it arrived on the fourteenth of April.*

Washington and the continental army were received with enthusiasm by the inhabitants of Boston. The legislature of Massachusetts presented the commander-in-chief with an address, congratulating him on the successful result of the siege of Boston, and expressing their obligations for the great services he had rendered to his country. The continental Congress also passed a unanimous vote of thanks to him, and a gold medal was ordered to be struck commemorative of the evacuation of Boston, and as an honorable token of the public approbation of his conduct.

General Howe, with the British army of about ten thousand men, and one thousand refugees or tories, sailed for Halifax in seventy-eight ships and transports; but anxious for the safety of New York, and apprehensive that the British commander might have concealed his real designs and directed his course to that important point, the American commander-in-chief had directed the march of his army to New York, as already stated. They went by land to Norwich, Connecticut, and thence by water through Long Island sound. When it was ascertained that the British fleet had put to sea, ten days after the evacuation of Boston, Washington set off for New York, passing through Providence, Norwich, and New London. At Norwich he had an interview with Governor Trumbull who came there to meet him. On the thirteenth of April he arrived in New York.†

General Washington found it impracticable, or inconsistent with his duties to carry out his original design of visiting his family at Mount Vernon in the winter, and attending for a short space to his private affairs. Mrs. Washington therefore joined him at headquarters at Cambridge, in December, 1775, where she remained till the next spring. This was her practice during the war. She passed the winters with her husband in camp, and returned at the opening of the campaigns to Mount Vernon.

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* Marshall.

† Sparks.

His large estates were consigned to the care of a superintendent, Mr. Lund Washington, who executed the trust with diligence and fidelity. Notwithstanding the multitude of public concerns, which at all times pressed heavily, and which he never neglected, the thoughts of General Washington constantly reverted to his farms. In the midst of the most stirring events of the war, he kept up an unremitted correspondence with his manager, in which he entered into details, gave minute instructions, and exacting reports, relating to the culture of his lands, and every transaction of business. From the beginning to the end of the revolution, Lund Washington wrote to the general, as often at least as two or three times a month, and commonly every week, detailing minutely all the events that occurred on the plantation. These letters were regularly answered by the general, even when the weight and embarrassment of public duties pressed heavily upon him.

An extract from one of his letters to Lund Washington on these topics, dated December, 1775, will show a trait of character, and the footing on which he left his household at Mount Vernon.

" Let the hospitalities of the house, with respect to the poor, be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them in idleness ; and I have no objection to your giving my money in charity, to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year, when you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no objection is, that is my desire that it should be done. You are to consider, that neither myself nor wife is now in the way to do these good offices. In all other respects, I recommend it to you, and have no doubt of your observing the greatest economy and frugality ; as I suppose you know, that I do not get a farthing for my services here, more than my expenses. It becomes necessary, therefore, for me to be saving at home."*

To detail all the operations of Washington in public affairs in the years which followed would be to repeat the history of the war of the American revolution, and, of course, greatly exceed the limits of the part of this work allotted to a memoir of his life. We can therefore only allude to the prominent events with which his personal history was connected during that eventful period, following him rapidly in his movements, until peace and the acknowledgment of American independence by Great Britain crowned his efforts in the cause of his country.

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* Sparks

The evacuation of Boston varied the scene, but did not lessen the labors of Washington. Henceforward, he had a much more formidable enemy to contend with. The royal army in Boston was, on a small scale, calculated to awe the inhabitants of Massachusetts into obedience, but the campaign of 1776 was opened in New York with a force far exceeding anything hitherto seen in America. Including the navy, as well as the army, it amounted to fifty-five thousand men, and was calculated on the idea of reducing the whole united colonies. The operations contemplated could be best carried on from the central province of New York, and the army could be supplied with provisions from the adjacent islands, and easily defended by the British navy. For these reasons, the evacuation of Boston, and the concentration of the royal forces at New York, had been for some time resolved upon in England.

The reasons that had induced the British to gain possession of New York, weighed with Washington to prevent or delay it. He had therefore, as already stated, detached largely from his army before Boston, and sent General Lee to take the command, following the main army himself immediately after the evacuation, and departure of the British army from Boston; and he now made every preparation in his power for the defence of New York. Considerable time was allowed for this purpose, in consequence of the delay of General Howe at Halifax, where that officer waited for promised reinforcements from England.*

Besides the preparations for defence against the British army, Washington had to guard against the numerous disaffected persons and tories, or American loyalists on Long island, Staten island, and in the city of New York. By the persevering representations of Washington, Congress adopted measures for the apprehension of this class of enemies to the American cause. Many tories were apprehended in New York and on Long island; some were imprisoned, others disarmed. A deep plot originating with the British governor Tryon, who continued on board a vessel at the Hook, was defeated by a timely and fortunate discovery. His agents were found enlisting men in the American camp, and enticing them with rewards. The infection spread to a considerable extent, and even reached the general's guard, some of whom enlisted. A soldier of the guard was found guilty by a court-martial and executed. It was a part of the plot to seize General Washington and convey him to the enemy.†

General Howe, with a part of the British fleet and army arrived at the hook from Halifax, in the latter part of June, and took possession of Staten island. The general then awaited the arrival of his brother Lord Howe, who was on his way from England with another fleet, and proposals from the British ministry for an accommodation to be offered to the Americans, before hostilities should be renewed.

* Ramsay.

† Sparks.

General Washington had visited Philadelphia in the month of May, for the purpose of advising with Congress on the state of affairs and concerting arrangements for the campaign. He was absent fifteen days, examining on his way, Staten island and the Jersey shore, with the view of determining the proper places for works of defence. He seems to have been disappointed and concerned at dissensions in Congress which portended no good to the common cause. It was known, from late proceedings in parliament, that commissioners were coming out from England with proposals of accommodation. In a letter to his brother, dated at Philadelphia, May 31, 1776. Washington expresses his gratification that the Virginia convention had passed a vote with great unanimity, recommending to Congress to declare the united colonies free and independent states. "Things have come to such a pass now," he writes, "as to convince us, that we have nothing more to expect from the justice of Great Britain; also that she is capable of the most delusive arts; for I am satisfied that no commissioners were ever designed, except Hessians and other foreigners; and that the idea was only to deceive and throw us off our guard. The first has been too effectually accomplished; as many members of Congress, in short, the representation of whole provinces, are still feeding themselves upon the dainty food of reconciliation; and though they will not allow that the expectation of it has any influence upon their judgment with respect to their preparations for defence, it is but too obvious that it has an operation upon every part of their conduct, and is a clog to their proceedings. It is not in the nature of things to be otherwise; for no man that entertains a hope of seeing this dispute speedily and equitably adjusted by commissioners, will go to the same expense and run the same hazards to prepare for the worst event, as he who believes that he must conquer, or submit to unconditional terms, and the concomitants, such as confiscation, hanging, and the like."

Notwithstanding the hesitancy of some of the members of Congress, there was still a large majority for vigorous action; and while he was there, they resolved to reinforce the army at New York, with thirteen thousand eight hundred militia, drawn from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey; and a flying camp of ten thousand more, from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware.*

The Declaration of Independence by Congress, on the fourth of July, 1776, was received by General Washington, and read to the troops under his command on the ninth, at six o'clock in the evening; the regiments being paraded for the purpose. The document was read in the hearing of all, and received with the most hearty demonstrations of joy and satisfaction. In the orders of the day it was said, "The general hopes that this important event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer and soldier to act with fidelity and courage, as knowing, that now the peace and safety of his country depend, under God, solely on the success of our arms, and that he is now in the service of a state possessed of sufficient power to reward his merit, and advance him to the highest honors of a free country."

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* Sparks.

Lord Howe arrived at Staten island on the twelfth of July, joining his brother, the general, with the expected additional forces from England. The command of the fleet had been conferred upon the former, and both the brothers were commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies. Lord Howe was not deterred by the declaration of independence from trying the influence of his powers for pacification, although he regarded the declaration as a circumstance unfavorable to the success of his mission He sent on shore a circular letter, dated off the coast of Massachusetts, addressed severally to the late governors under the crown (whom he supposed to be still in power), enclosing a declaration which he requested them to make public. It announced his authority to grant pardons, and to declare any colony or place under the protection of the king. Assurances were also given that the meritorious services of all persons who would aid in restoring tranquillity in the colonies would be duly considered.

These papers were transmitted by the commander-in-chief to Congress, who directed their publication, that the people "might be informed of what nature were the commissioners, and what the terms with the expectation of which the insidious court of Britain had sought to amuse and disarm them."

About the same time Lord Howe despatched a letter to General Washington by a flag, which the general refused to receive, as it did not acknowledge the public character with which he was invested, being directed "*To George Washington, Esq.*" The course pursued was approved by Congress, and a resolve was passed, that in future no letters should be received from the enemy, by commanders in the American army which should not be directed to them in the characters they sustained. A few days afterward General Howe wrote to Washington, repeating the same superscription as had been used by his brother. This letter was likewise refused, but an explanation took place through an interview between Colonel Patterson, adjutant-general of the British army and General Washington. General Howe was induced to change his superscription, and from that time all letters addressed by the British commanders to General Washington bore his proper titles.

In the conference between Washington and Colonel Patterson, the adjutant-general observed that "the commissioners were armed with great powers, and would be very happy in effecting an accommodation." General Washington replied "that from what appeared, these powers were only to grant pardons; that they who had committed no fault wanted no pardon."

General Howe, perceiving that all attempts at conciliation were hopeless, prepared for the operations of the campaign. He however, delayed for some time active measures, as he was still waiting for further reinforcements. This period was employed by Washington in strengthening his works on New York island. Fort Washington, on an eminence in the north part of the island, on the east bank of the Hudson, and Fort Lee, on the opposite shore in New Jersey, were commenced, and between these forts the channel of the river was obstructed by hulks of vessels and chevaux-de-frise. Batteries were erected on the margins of the North and East rivers — redoubts were thrown up at different places, and the island generally placed in a state of defence

The British reinforcements had all arrived by the middle of August, and the aggregate of their army was estimated at over twenty-four thousand men. To this army, aided in its operations by a numerous fleet, was opposed the American army, a force unstable in its nature, incapable from its structure of receiving discipline, and inferior to the enemy in numbers, in army, and in every military equipment. In a letter dated the 8th of August, General Washington stated his army consisted of only seventeen thousand, two hundred and twenty-five men, of whom three thousand, six hundred and sixty-eight were sick. This force was rendered the more inadequate to its objects by being necessarily divided for the defence of posts, some of which were fifteen miles distant from others, with navigable waters between them. The army was soon afterward reinforced by regulars and militia, which augmented it to twenty-seven thousand men, of whom one fourth were sick. The diseases incident to new troops prevailed extensively, and were aggravated by a deficiency of tents.

The American troops were so judiciously distributed on York island, Long island, Governor's island, Paulus Hook, and on the sound toward New Rochelle, East and West Chester, that the enemy were very cautious in determining when or where to commence offensive operations. Every probable point of embarkation was watched, and guarded with a force sufficient to embarrass, though very insufficient to prevent a landing. From the arrival of the British army at Staten island, the Americans were in daily expectation of being attacked. General Washington was therefore strenuous in preparing his troops for action. He tried every expedient to kindle in their breasts the love of their country, and a high tone of indignation against its invaders. Thus did he, by infusing into every bosom those sentiments which would stimulate to the greatest individual exertion, endeavor to compensate for the want of arms, of discipline, and of numbers.

Early in the morning of the twenty-second of August, the principal part of the British army landed on Long island, under cover of the guns of the fleet; and extended their line from the Narrows, through Utrecht and Gravesend, to the village of Flatbush. On the twenty-seventh, the fifth day after landing, a general action took place between the two armies; the

Americans on Long island, then commanded by General Putnam, being attacked by the British army, under General Clinton. The variety of ground, and the different parties employed in different places, both in the attack and defence, occasioned a succession of small engagements, pursuits, and slaughter, which lasted for many hours.

The Americans were defeated in all directions. The circumstances which eminently contributed to this, were the superior discipline of the assailants, and the want of early intelligence of their movements. There was not a single corps of cavalry in the American army. The transmission of intelligence was of course always slow, and often impracticable. From the want of it, some of their detachments, while retreating before one portion of the enemy, were advancing toward another, of whose movements they were ignorant.

In the height of the engagement Washington passed over to Long island, and with infinite regret saw the slaughter of his best troops, but had not the power to prevent it; for had he drawn his whole force to their support, he must have risked everything on a single engagement. He adopted the wiser plan of evacuating the island, with all the forces he could bring off. In superintending this necessary, but difficult and dangerous movement, and the events of the preceding day, Washington was indefatigable. For forty-eight hours he never closed his eyes, and was almost constantly on horseback. In less than thirteen hours the field artillery, tents, baggage, and about nine thousand men, were conveyed from Long island to the city of New York, over the East river, and without the knowledge of the British, though not six hundred yards distant. The darkness of the night and a heavy fog in the morning, together with a fair wind after midnight, favored this retreat. It was completed without interruption some time after the dawning of the day.*

The loss of the Americans at the battle of Long island, was twelve hundred men, about a thousand of whom were captured. The loss of the British was less than four hundred.

Immediately after the success of the British arms on Long island, Admiral Lord Howe, as one of the king's pacificators, made another attempt at negotiation. He admitted General Sullivan, who had been taken prisoner, to his parole, and sent him to Philadelphia with a verbal message to Congress, the purport of which was, that although not authorized to treat with Congress as such, it being an illegal assembly, yet he was desirous of conferring with some of its members as private gentlemen only, whom he would meet at any place they might appoint. To this Congress sent a reply by General Sullivan, refusing to authorize any of their body to confer with his lordship in their private capacity; but saying that they would send a committee to inquire into his authority to treat with persons authorized by Congress, and to hear his propositions for peace. Instructions were at the same time sent to General Washington by Congress, that no propositions for peace ought to be received, unless directed in writing to the representatives of the United States; and to inform those who might make application for a treaty, that Congress would cheerfully conclude a treaty of peace whenever such should be proposed to them as representatives of an independent people.

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* Ramsay.

Doctor Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, were appointed by Congress to confer with Lord Howe, whom they met for that purpose on Staten island. As Lord Howe declined conferring with the committee except as private gentlemen, he being unauthorized to recognise Congress as a legal body, the conference terminated without effecting anything. The commissioners absolutely refused to entertain any propositions except they were made to them as the representatives of a free and independent people. The interview was therefore closed, with the understanding, that war or absolute independence were the only alternatives the Americans chose to recognise.

General Howe now took measures to drive the Americans out of the city of New York. He made preparations to have troops landed from the ships on opposite sides of the upper part of the island, while the main body of the fleet entered the harbor, and took a position nearly within cannon-shot of the city. By this arrangement the Americans would be hemmed in, and be compelled to evacuate the city, or suffer the privations and dangers of a siege.

Viewing these preparations of the British commander with alarm, Washington called a council of war, on the twelfth of September, sixteen days after the battle of Long island, and recommended an immediate withdrawal of the troops. This measure was finally determined upon, and with great activity the Americans commenced removing the artillery and stores far above the city, to Dobb's ferry on the western shore of the Hudson. The commander-in-chief retired to the heights of Harlem, and a force of nine thousand men was stationed at Mount Washington, King's bridge, and other posts in the vicinity, while about five thousand remained near the city. The residue were placed between these extreme points, to act at either place as occasion might require.

On the fifteenth, a division of the British army, landed at Kipp's bay on the East river, three miles above the city, and attacked the American batteries erected there. The troops stationed at this place fled with precipitation, without waiting for the approach of the enemy. Two brigades were put in motion to support them. General Washington rode to the scene of action, and to his great mortification met the whole party retreating. While he was exerting himself to rally them, on the appearance of a small corps of the enemy, they again broke and ran off in disorder. Such dastardly conduct raised a tempest in the usually tranquil mind of Washington. He viewed with infinite concern this behavior of his troops, as threatening ruin to his country. His soul was harrowed up with apprehensions that his country would be conquered, her army disgraced, and her liberties destroyed, while the unsuccessful issue of the present struggle would, for ages to come, deter posterity from the bold design of asserting their rights. Impressed with these ideas, he hazarded his person for some considerable time in the rear of his own men, and in front of the enemy, with his horse's head toward the latter, as if in expectation that, by an honorable death, he might escape the infamy he dreaded from the dastardly conduct of troops in whom he could place no dependence. His aids, and the confidential friends around his person, by indirect violence, compelled him to retire. In consequence of their address and importunity, a life was saved for public service, which otherwise, from a sense of honor and a gust of passion, seemed to be devoted to almost certain destruction.*

The troops referred to continued their retreat, until they reached the main body of the army at Harlem heights. The division in or near the city, under the command of General Putnam, retreated with great difficulty, leaving behind them their heavy artillery, and a large portion of the baggage, provisions, and military stores, including the tents, which had not been removed. The loss of the tents was severely felt by the army, at the approach of winter. Fifteen of the Americans were killed, and three hundred taken prisoners. The British army entered the city without much loss and took formal possession of it, to the great joy of the tories ; but they had hardly become quiet before a fire broke out, which raged until it had destroyed about a third of the city.

General Howe having organized a temporary government, and left some troops in the city, marched with the main body of his army up York island and encamped near the American lines in front of Harlem heights. The British lines extended across the island, while their shipping defended their flanks. Washington had made his strongest post at King's bridge, as that preserved his communication with the country. On the day after the retreat from New York, a skirmish took place between advanced parties of both armies, in which the Americans gained a decided advantage, though with the loss of two gallant officers, Colonel Knowlton of Connecticut, and Major Leitch of Virginia. This was the first advantage the army under the command of Washington, had gained in the campaign. Its influence on the army was great, and the general gave public thanks to the troops engaged therein.

On the twenty-second of October, Washington fell back to White Plains in Westchester county, and on the twenty-eighth, a partial action was fought there, which resulted in the repulse of the Americans, with some loss. Washington retired to Northcastle, five miles farther north, and Howe discontinued further pursuit, directing his attention to the American posts on the Hudson river. Forts Washington and Lee, were taken by the British army in November, the garrison in the former, consisting of nearly three thousand men, surrendering as prisoners-of-war, and the British losing about a thousand men in the assault. The garrison in Fort Lee made a hasty retreat and joined the main army, leaving behind them their cannon, tents, and stores, which fell into the hands of the victors.

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* Ramsay.

It having become evident to General Washington, that General Howe had changed his plan of operations, and designed an invasion of New Jersey, he crossed the North river with the American army, and, retreating before Lord Cornwallis, who had entered New Jersey with six thousand men, he took post along the Hackensack river. His situation there was nearly similar to that which he had abandoned ; for he was liable to be enclosed between the Hackensack and Passaic rivers. He therefore, on the approach of the enemy, passed over to Newark, on the west side of the latter river, where he stood his ground some days ; but being incapable of any effectual opposition, he retreated to New Brunswick, on the day Lord Cornwallis entered Newark. At New Brunswick, Washington kept his troops in motion, and even advanced a detachment, as if intending to engage the enemy. Nor did he quit this position till their advanced guards were in sight. He then retreated toward Trenton, pursuing a route near the Raritan river, that he might be in the way to prevent General Howe from throwing in a strong detachment between him and Philadelphia. Although this retreat was effected without loss from the enemy, the small force which began it was daily lessening, by the expiration of the term of service for which they were engaged. This terminated in November with many, and in December, with nearly two thirds of the residue. No persuasions were availing to induce their continuance. They abandoned their general, when the advancing enemy was nearly in sight. General Lee who commanded the eastern troops at White Plains, was ordered by Washington to cross the North river, and join the retreating army in New Jersey. Lee was so tardy in obeying the order, that he was three weeks reaching Morristown. While on his march he lodged one night at a house about three miles from camp, where he was taken prisoner by a company of British light-horse. The command of his division devolved on General Sullivan, who marched it to the main army. Four regiments under General Gates, soon after arrived from Ticonderoga. These forces with others, joined Washington, after he had crossed the Delaware with his army of about three thousand men, which he accomplished on the seventh of December. The enemy did not attempt to cross the river, General Howe contenting himself with having overrun New Jersey. It was however expected, that, as soon as the ice should become sufficiently strong, the enemy would cross the Delaware, and bring all their force to bear upon Philadelphia. Anticipating this event, Congress adjourned to Baltimore ; and General Putnam who took the command of the militia in Philadelphia, was instructed to prepare for an obstinate defence of that city.

In this very dangerous crisis, and which may be considered the most gloomy period of the war, Washington made every exertion to procure reinforcements. These exertions were in a great measure unavailing, except in and near Philadelphia. Fifteen hundred of the citizens of that metropolis marched to the aid of Washington. The American army now amounted to about seven thousand men, after the arrival of the forces under Sullivan and Gates. The two armies were separated from each other by the river Delaware. The British in the security of conquest, cantoned their troops in Burlington, Bordentown, Trenton, and other towns of New Jersey. On receiving information of their numbers and different cantonments, Washington observed—" Now is the time to clip their wings, when they are so spread." Yielding to his native spirit of enterprise, which had hitherto been repressed, he formed the bold design of recrossing the Delaware, and attacking the British posts on its eastern banks.*

In a letter to Joseph Reed, dated Bristol, Pennsylvania, December 23, 1776, Washington thus discloses his designs:—

" Christmas-day, at night, one hour before day, is the time fixed upon for our attempt on Trenton; our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had any conception of, but necessity, dire necessity, will, nay must, justify an attack."

The desperate situation of the American cause at this time is thus alluded to by him, in a letter to his brother, John Augustine Washington, dated, December 18, 1776:—

" We were obliged to cross the Delaware with less than three thousand men fit for duty; the enemy's numbers, from the best accounts, exceeding ten or twelve thousand men.

" Since I came on this side, I have been joined by about two thousand of the city militia, and I understand that some of the country militia are on their way; but we are in a very disaffected part of the province, and, between you and me, I think our affairs are in a very bad condition.

" You can form no idea of the perplexity of my situation. No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them. However, under a full conviction of the justice of our cause, I can not entertain an idea that it will finally sink, though it may remain for a time under a cloud."

In the evening of Christmas-day, General Washington made arrangements for passing over the Delaware, in three divisions. At Trenton were three regiments of Hessians, amounting to about fifteen hundred men, and a troop of British light-horse. Small detachments of the British army were stationed at Bordentown, Burlington, Black Horse, and Mount Holly. General Cadwallader was to cross at Bristol, and attack the latter posts; General Ewing was to cross a little below Trenton, to intercept the retreat of the enemy in that direction, while the commander-in-chief, with twenty-four hundred continental troops, should cross nine miles above Trenton, to make the principal attack. But Generals Cadwallader and Ewing were unable to pass, from the quantity of floating ice which obstructed the boats. The division commanded by Washington, accompanied by Generals Greene, Sullivan, Stirling, Mercer, and St. Clair, alone succeeded. These troops began to cross early in the evening, but were so retarded by ice, that it was nearly four o'clock in the morning of the twenty-sixth, before the whole body with the artillery, was landed on the New Jersey bank of the river. They were formed in two divisions, and marched by different roads to Trenton, where they arrived within three minutes of each other, about eight o'clock in the morning. They met with but slight opposition, except from two or three pieces of artillery which were soon taken. The surprised Hessians attempted a retreat to Princeton, but were intercepted, and, finding themselves surrounded, soon laid down their arms and surrendered as prisoners-of-war. Between thirty and forty Hessians, among whom was Colonel Rahl, their commander, were killed. The American loss was two privates killed, and two others frozen to death. Captain William Washington, distinguished at a later period of the war as an officer of cavalry, and Lieutenant James Monroe, afterward president of the United States, were wounded in taking the enemy's artillery. The number of prisoners was nearly one thousand, and the trophies of victory were six brass field-pieces, a thousand stand of arms, and considerable ammunition. The British light-horse, and about five hundred Hessians, escaped at the beginning of the action and fled to Bordentown, where they joined the British and Hessian troops in that vicinity and all retreated to Princeton; thus the whole line of the enemy's encampments on the Delaware was broken up. It was thought most prudent by Washington to recross the Delaware, with all his prisoners and military stores, on the same day, which he accomplished the same evening, and gained his encampment on the Pennsylvania side.

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* Ramsay.

This brilliant exploit of Washington, and unexpected success of the continental troops under his command, electrified the American people, particularly those of the middle states, who were either desponding or disaffected at the aspect of affairs, before the tables were turned by this fortunate event. The British generals, Howe and Cornwallis, were astonished and bewildered at this display of vigor on the part of the American general. Previous to this affair at Trenton, New Jersey appeared to be subdued, Pennsylvania was supposed to be anxious for British pardon, and instead of offensive operations, the total dispersion of the small remnant of the American army was confidently anticipated. Finding that he was contending with an adversary who could never cease to be formidable, and that the conquest of America was more distant than had been supposed, Gen. Howe determined, in the depth of winter, to commence active operations. Lord Cornwallis, who had retired to New York, with the intention of embarking for England, returned to New Jersey in great force, for the purpose of recovering the ground which had been lost. The British army was assembled at Princeton, with the design of making an attack upon the Americans under Washington. who had again crossed the Delaware, and taken post at Trenton, determined to act on the offensive, after being joined by considerable reinforcements of regulars and militia.

Lord Cornwallis advanced on the morning of the second of January, 1777, and his van reached Trenton the same afternoon. On its approach, General Washington retired across the creek which runs through the town. The British finding the fords of the creek well guarded, desisted from attempts to cross, and kindled their fires. The Americans kindled their fires likewise, and a cannonade was kept up till dark.

The situation of General Washington was once more extremely critical. The passage of the Delaware was rendered difficult by the ice, and if he remained at Trenton, an attack on the following morning, by an overwhelming force seemed certain, which must render the destruction of his army inevitable. In this embarrassing state of things, he formed the bold design of abandoning the Delaware, and marching by a circuitous route along the left flank of the British army, into its rear at Princeton; and, after beating the troops at that place, to move rapidly on Brunswick, where the baggage, and principal magazines of the British army lay, under a weak guard.*

This plan being approved by a council of war, Washington silently withdrew his army from Trenton, favored by the darkness of the night, while the enemy were at rest; leaving a few of his men at work with pickaxes, and the camp-fires kindled, for the purpose of deceiving the British into the belief that the Americans were throwing up intrenchments. Before dawn these men left their work and hastened to join the American army who were then on a rapid march toward Princeton, where three British regiments had encamped the preceding night. Two of these regiments commencing their march toward Trenton, early in the morning to join the rear of their army, met the Americans, a mile and a half from Trenton. The morning being foggy, the enemy at first mistook the Americans for Hessians, but the mistake was soon discovered, and a smart skirmish ensued. The British commander sent to Princeton for the other regiment, which was soon on the spot, and after a battle of more than an hour, the American militia gave way in disorder. General Mercer, attempting to rally them, was mortally wounded. Washington pushed forward at the head of his division and rallied the flying troops, who encouraged by his example made a stand, and compelled the British to retreat in various directions. In the course of the engagement, one hundred of the enemy were killed and wounded, and about three hundred taken prisoners. The rest made their escape; some by pushing on to Trenton, others by returning to Brunswick. The American loss was about one hundred.

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* Marshall.

At break of day, Lord Cornwallis perceived, to his great astonishment, that the Americans had deserted their camp at Trenton, and at once penetrating the designs of Washington upon New Brunswick, marched hastily toward that place to protect his stores there, and was close in the rear of the Americans, before they could leave Princeton. General Washington, finding his army exhausted with fatigue and closely pursued by a superior force, abandoned the remaining part of his original plan, and took the road leading up the country to the north. Lord Cornwallis continued his march to Brunswick, and Washington retired to Morristown, where he established his headquarters. Having given his army some repose, he entered the field again in an offensive attitude, and in a short time overran the whole country as far as the Raritan to the south. He also took possession of Newark, Elizabethtown, and Woodbridge. The British army, meanwhile, was restricting its operations to a small part of New Jersey.

The victories at Trenton and Princeton produced the most extensive effects, and had a decided influence on subsequent events. Philadelphia was saved for that winter, New Jersey was mostly recovered from the enemy, and the drooping spirits of the Americans were revived. Their gloomy apprehensions yielded to a confidence in their general and their army, and in the ultimate success of their struggles for liberty and independence.

Gen. Washington had been invested by Congress a few days before the successful affair at Trenton, with additional and extraordinary powers as commander-in-chief, which additional powers were conferred on him for a period of six months, and the wisdom of the measure was soon seen and felt by the favorable turn of American affairs. After the recent successes he hoped that his country would have placed at his disposal a large and efficient army, to enable him to undertake decisive operations before reinforcements to the British army should arrive in the ensuing spring. Congress, at his instance passed the requisite resolutions; but these could not be carried into effect, without the aid of the state legislatures. The recruiting service was therefore retarded by the delays consequent upon the action of thirteen legislative bodies, and Washington with infinite reluctance, was obliged to give up his favorite project of an early active campaign. The remainder of the winter season passed over in a light war of skirmishes. They were generally in favor of the Americans; but Washington's views were much more extensive; he cherished hopes of being enabled to strike a decisive blow against the British forces during the winter, but being disappointed, he went into winter-quarters with the main army, at Morristown. Cantonments were likewise established at various points from Princeton on the right, where General Putnam commanded, to the Highlands on the left, which post continued under the charge of General Heath. The first care of General Washington, after putting the troops in winter-quarters, was drawn to the completion of the army for the next campaign; and he wrote circular letters to the governors of the middle and eastern states, urging them to adopt prompt and effectual methods for raising recruits, and filling up their regiments. To stimulate the activity of the states, by reiterated representations to their governors and legislatures, by argument, persuasion, and appeals to every motive of pride, honor, and patriotism, was the task which he was obliged to repeat every winter; and this was a source of increasing anxiety, from the time the troops went into winter-quarters, till they again took the field to combat the enemy. Congress, embarrassed by the indefinite nature of their powers deliberated with caution, and were seldom ready to act in military affairs, till incited by the counsels or earnest entreaties of the commander-in-chief.*

As the recruits for the American army were collected, the camp at Morristown was broken up, and the army assembled on the twenty-eighth of May, 1777, at Middlebrook, in New Jersey, ten miles from Brunswick. The exertions made during the winter by the commander-in-chief, to raise a powerful army for the ensuing campaign, had not been successful. On the twentieth of May, the total of the army in New Jersey, excluding cavalry and artillery, amounted only to eight thousand, three hundred and seventy-eight men, of whom upward of two thousand were sick, and more than half were raw recruits. Anticipating a movement of the British army toward Philadelphia, Washington had given orders for assembling an army of militia, with a few continental troops, on the western bank of the Delaware, to be commanded by General Arnold. The primary objects to which Washington directed his attention in this campaign, were to endeavor to prevent the British from obtaining possession of Philadelphia, or the Highlands on the Hudson river, and he made such an arrangement of his troops as would enable him to oppose either. The northern troops were divided between Ticonderoga, and Peekskill, while those from New Jersey, and other middle states, were encamped at Middlebrook.

On the twelfth of June, General Howe assembled the main body of his army at Brunswick, in New Jersey, and gave strong indications of an intention to reach Philadelphia by land. The American army under Washington, was now swelled to about fourteen thousand. Howe feigned a design to cross the Delaware by making toward that river, but failing to draw Washington into a general engagement, by his various manœuvres, he withdrew his forces to Amboy, and passed over to Staten island, leaving the Americans in quiet possession of New Jersey. Having abandoned the idea of forming a junction with General Burgoyne, who, having arrived from England with a powerful army, was invading the northern states by way of Canada, General Howe turned his attention toward Philadelphia. He resolved to proceed to that city by way of the Chesapeake bay, and accordingly embarked at Staten island, with about eighteen thousand troops, on board of the British fleet under Lord Howe. He left General Sir Henry Clinton, with a large force to defend New York, and in the latter part of July appeared off the capes of Delaware ; but the fleet suddenly again put to sea, and its destination was for some time a matter of uncertainty to the Americans. In the meanwhile, Washington marched the main body of his army to Germantown, to await certain information respecting the movements of General Howe. During his suspense, he took an opportunity of conferring with committees of Congress, at Philadelphia, and it was at this time that he had his first interview with the Marquis de Lafayette, on his arrival from France, to offer his services to the Americans. Congress appointed the marquis a major-general in the army, and he was invited by General Washington to become a member of his military family, which position he maintained during the war.

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* Sparks.

The British fleet having sailed up the Chesapeake, reached Elk river on the twenty-fifth of August, where the troops, under Gen. Howe were landed, and commenced their march toward Philadelphia. The day before the landing of the British, the American army marched through Philadelphia, toward Wilmington, in Delaware. Advance parties from each army soon met, and several skirmishes took place.

As the British army approached, Washington took post on the river Brandywine, and awaited the attack of the enemy. A general action took place early on the eleventh of September, which continued all day, and terminated in favor of the British, who remained in possession of the field of battle, while the Americans retreated to Chester, and the following day to Philadelphia.

The British force in this engagement, was stated at about eighteen thousand ; that of the Americans a little over eleven thousand. The American loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, was over a thousand ; that of the British was less than six hundred.

Washington made every exertion to repair the loss which had been sustained. The battle of Brandywine was represented as not being decisive. Congress and the people wished to hazard a second engagement, for the security of Philadelphia ; General Howe sought for it, and Washington did not decline it. He therefore advanced on the Lancaster road, with an intention of meeting the British army. Both armies were on the point of engaging, but were prevented by a violent storm. When the rain ceased, the Americans finding that their ammunition was ruined, withdrew to a place of safety. The British instead of urging an action, afterward began to march toward Reading. To save the stores at that place, Washington took a new position, and left the British in undisturbed possession of the roads which led to Philadelphia. His troops were worn down with a succession of severe duties. There were in his army above a thousand men who were barefooted, and who had performed all their late movements in that condition.

Though Washington had failed in his object of saving Philadelphia, yet he retained the confidence of Congress and the states. With an army inferior in numbers, discipline, and equipments, he had delayed the British army thirty days in advancing sixty miles through an open country, without fortifications.

The British army entered Philadelphia, on the twenty-sixth of September, and pushed forward to Germantown. Congress had previously adjourned to Lancaster. While the British camp at Germantown was weakened by detachments sent against the American forts on the Delaware, Gen. Washington, having received considerable reinforcements to his army, resolved to attack the enemy in their encampment. Accordingly, in the evening of the third of October, the Americans advanced in four divisions, and after a march of fourteen miles to Germantown, at daybreak the next morning took the British by surprise. A battle commenced, and for a time victory seemed to incline to the Americans ; but finally, after a severe action, they were repulsed with great slaughter, losing about eleven hundred men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The British loss was not more than half that number. General Howe shortly after evacuated Germantown, and concentrated his forces at Philadelphia, where the British army under his command took up their winter-quarters. Howe at first directed his attention to the opening of the navigation of the Delaware river, which had been obstructed by many ingenious contrivances placed there by the Americans. This task employed the British for more than six weeks ; and after a great display of gallantry on both sides, it was finally accomplished.

When the Delaware was cleared, and there was a free inland communication for the British between Philadelphia and New York, Gen. Howe determined to close the campaign by an attack upon Washington, then stationed at Whitemarsh, about eleven miles from Philadelphia. On the night of the fourth of December, Howe marched out of the city and took post upon Chestnut Hill, in front of the American army, which had been reinforced by detachments from the northern army. Finding Washington's position too strong to risk a general attack, after a few days' skirmishing, Howe fell back upon Philadelphia.

While the British arms were successful on the banks of the Delaware, intelligence arrived that General Burgoyne and the British army of the north, had surrendered prisoners-of-war, to the American northern army under General Gates. This event took place at Saratoga, in the state of New York, on the seventeenth of October. On the receipt of this important information, General Washington took measures to obtain large reinforcements to the forces under his immediate command, from the victorious troops of the north. He therefore deputed one of his aids, Colonel Alexander Hamilton, to wait on General Gates, and communicate his wishes to that officer. In his letter of instructions to Hamilton, General Washington writes as follows, under date of October 30, 1777 :—

"It has been judged expedient by the members of a council of war held yesterday, that one of the gentlemen of my family should be sent to General Gates, in order to lay before him the state of this army, and the situation of the enemy, and to point out to him the many happy consequences that will accrue from an immediate reinforcement being sent from the northern army. I have thought proper to appoint you to that duty, and desire that you will immediately set out for Albany.

"What you are chiefly to attend to is, to point out to General Gates the absolute necessity that there is for his detaching a very considerable part of the army, at present under his command, to the reinforcement of this; a measure that will, in all probability, reduce General Howe to the same situation in which General Burgoyne now is, should he attempt to remain in Philadelphia.

"I have understood that General Gates has already detached Nixon's and Glover's brigades to join General Putnam.* If this be a fact, you are to desire General Putnam, to send the two brigades forward with the greatest expedition, as there can be no occasion for them there."

To the president of Congress, Washington also wrote on the first of November as follows: "I can not conceive that there is any object, now remaining, that demands our attention and most vigorous efforts so much as the destruction of the [British] army in this quarter. Should we be able to effect this, we shall have little to fear in future." And on the seventeenth of November, he wrote to the same functionary thus: "I am anxiously waiting the arrival of the troops from the northward, who ought to have been here before this. The want of these troops has embarrassed all my measures exceedingly."

Instead of promptly seconding the desires of Washington, when communicated to them by Hamilton, Generals Gates and Putnam were unwilling to part with a sufficient number of the troops under their respective commands to effect the object designed. The former general was then contemplating an expedition to Ticonderoga, and the latter an attack on the British forces in New York. After considerable delay, those generals, at the urgent request of Colonel Hamilton, finally sent on about five thousand men to the aid of General Washington; but in the meantime, Sir Henry Clinton, who commanded the British forces stationed at the city of New York, detached about six thousand men to the aid of General Howe in Philadelphia.

Thus, will it be seen, that the well-formed plans of General Washington, to follow up the capture of the British army under Burgoyne, by that of the forces under Howe, were frustrated by the want of cordial co-operation on the part of Gates and Putnam. Had Washington succeeded by their prompt aid in effecting his purposes at Philadelphia, he would doubtless have moved upon New York, and by an attack upon that city, with the whole American forces, have either compelled the surrender of the forces under Sir Henry Clinton, or the evacuation by them of that point; and thus the campaign of 1777 would have been closed by a succession of American victories and British reverses, from which the latter could not have recovered. Is it too much to say, that in that event, Great Britain would have sought for peace in 1778, as she did afterward in 1782, and that the American alliance with France, would have thus been rendered unnecessary? This view is confirmed by the correspondence of Washington, who evidently was of opinion that a protracted war for years was unnecessary. In a letter to John Parke Custis, dated, February 28, 1781, more than three years after the fall of Philadelphia, he says, "We have brought a cause, which might have been happily *terminated years ago* by the adoption of proper measures, to the very verge of ruin," &c.

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* General Putnam then commanded the troops on the Hudson river, below the Highlands.

The following extract of a letter from Washington to Patrick Henry, dated November 13, 1777, soon after the British had entered Philadelphia, throws farther light upon the state of affairs at this period; and shows particularly that Washington's army had been weakened by reinforcements sent to the aid of General Gates.

"I was left to fight two battles, in order if possible to save Philadelphia, with less numbers than composed the army of my antagonist, while the world has given us double.

"How different is the case in the northern department. There the states of New York and New England, resolving to crush Burgoyne, continued pouring in their troops till the surrender of that army. Had the same spirit pervaded the people of this and the neighboring states, we might before this time have had General Howe nearly in the situation of General Burgoyne.

"My own difficulties in the course of the campaign have been not a little increased by the extra aid of continental troops which the gloomy prospect of our affairs, immediately after the reduction of Ticonderoga,* induced me to spare from this army."

The campaign of 1777 having closed, Washington communicated in general orders his intention of retiring with his army into winter-quarters. He expressed to his officers and soldiers his high approbation of their past conduct; gave an encouraging statement of the prospects of the country, and exhorted the men to bear the hardships inseparable from their condition. Valley Forge, about twenty miles northwest from Philadelphia, was selected by Washington for the winter-quarters of the army. This position was preferred to distant and more comfortable villages, as being calculated to give security to the country from the enemy. In the latter end of December, the troops were compelled to build huts for their own accommodation, and during the winter, which was unusually severe, their sufferings were great, from want of both clothing and food, Washington was compelled to make seizures from the inhabitants, as he was authorized by Congress to do, for the sustenance of his army. The commander-in-chief and his principal officers sent for their wives, from the different states to which they belonged, to pass the winter with their husbands at headquarters.

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* Ticonderoga was taken by Burgoyne, on the 5th of July, 1777.

To the other vexations and troubles which crowded on General Washington at this time, was added one of a peculiar nature. This was the formation of a cabal among members of Congress, and a few officers in the northern division of the army, the object of which was to supersede him in the command of the army, or to induce his resignation. This intrigue is known in American history under the name of *Conway's cabal.* Generals Gates, Mifflin, and Conway, are the only officers of note who were known to have been engaged in it. The former of these generals was proposed to supersede Washington. About the same time a board of war was created by Congress, of which General Gates was appointed president.

These machinations did not abate the ardor of Washington in the common cause. His patriotism was too solid to be shaken, either by envy or ingratitude. Nor was the smallest effect produced in diminishing his well-earned reputation. Zeal the most active, and services the most beneficial, and at the same time disinterested, had riveted him in the affections of his country and the army. Even the victorious troops under Gen. Gates, though comparisons highly flattering to their vanity, had been made between them and the army in Pennsylvania, clung to Washington as their political savior. The resentment of the people was generally excited against those who were supposed to be engaged in, or friendly to, the scheme of appointing a new commander-in-chief over the American army.*

The sufferings of the army while encamped at Valley Forge, are memmorable in the history of the war. They were not only greatly in want of the necessary supplies of food, but of blankets and clothing. "Naked and starving as they are," says Washington in one of his letters, "we can not enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their sufferings, to a general mutiny and desertion." Although the officers were better provided than the soldiers, yet none were exempt from privations and hardships.

When the encampment was begun at Valley Forge, the whole number of men in the field was 11,098, of whom 2,898, were unfit for duty, "being barefoot and otherwise naked." Much of the suffering of the army was attributed to mismanagement in the quartermaster's department; while reforms on this subject were proposed in Congress, the distresses of the troops approached their acme. General Washington found it necessary to interpose his personal exertions to procure provisions from a distance. In a few days the army was rescued from the famine with which it had been threatened. It was perceived that the difficulties which had occurred, were occasioned more by the want of due exertion in the commissary department, and by the efforts of the people to save their stock for a better market, than by a real deficiency of food in the country.

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* Ramsay.

The impression made on the British nation by the capitulation of Burgoyne, at length made its way into the cabinet, and Lord North brought into parliament two bills, which were adopted, having conciliation for their object. The first surrendered the principle of taxation, and the second empowered the crown to appoint commissioners to treat for peace with the United States. This movement was prompted by the apprehension that France would acknowledge the independence of America, and join in the war against England.

The terms held out by these bills were such as would have been accepted by the Americans in the early stages of the controversy, but they now came too late. It was no part of the plan of the British ministers to treat with the American states as an independent power. They were to go back to their old condition as colonies, favored with certain privileges; but having declared their independence, and shed their blood, and expended their means to sustain it, these new offers of the British government were not likely to gain the confidence or change the sentiments of those who had taken the lead in the cause of American liberty. Washington, in a letter to a member of Congress, after he had learned the purport of the conciliatory bills, expresses himself thus: "Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war. The injuries we have received from the British nation were so unprovoked, and have been so great and so many, that they can never be forgotten. Our fidelity as a people, our gratitude, our character as men, are opposed to a coalition with them as subjects, but in case of the last extremity." The subject appeared in the same light to Congress, and they unanimously resolved, that no advances on the part of the British government would be met, unless, as a preliminary step, they either withdrew their armies and fleets, or acknowledged, unequivocally, the independence of the United States.

On the second of May, 1778, ten days after Congress had passed their resolves respecting Lord North's bill of conciliation, a messenger arrived in the United States, bearing treaties of amity, commerce, and alliance, between France and America, signed at Paris, on the sixth of February, 1778, by which the independence of the United States was formally acknowledged by the former power. This intelligence was received with joy by the Americans, and the army participated in the rejoicings of the people on the occasion, and a day was set apart by the commander-in-chief for a public celebration in camp.

The British kept possession of Philadelphia through the winter and the spring following; and although Washington's camp was within twenty miles of the city, yet no enterprise was undertaken to molest him in his quarters. Foraging parties were sent out, and committed depredations on the inhabitants; but they were watched by the Americans, who sometimes met them in fierce and bloody rencontres. The British army in New York and Philadelphia, amounted to nearly thirty thousand, of which number 19,500 were in Philadelphia, and 10,400 in New York. There were besides 3,700 at Rhode Island. The American army on the eighth of May, 1778, did not exceed 15,000 men, including the detachments on the North river, and at other places. The number at Valley Forge was 11,800. The new establishment agreed upon by a committee of Congress at Valley Forge, was to consist of forty thousand continental troops, besides artillery and horse; but it was not supposed by a council of war, held on the eighth of May, that it could soon be raised higher than twenty thousand effective men, while the British army in the middle and eastern states, amounted, as above stated, to upward of thirty-three thousand.*

Sir William Howe, having at his own request been recalled, resigned the command of the British army to Sir Henry Clinton, and embarked for England. About the same time, orders were received for the evacuation of Philadelphia. The great naval force of France rendered that city a dangerous position, and determined the British cabinet to withdraw their army from the Delaware.

On the morning of the eighteenth of June, Philadelphia was evacuated by the British army, which crossed the Delaware, and landed on Gloucester point. Their line extended nearly twelve miles, and as they were encumbered with numerous wagons, and compelled to stop and build bridges over the streams in their route, their progress was slow. It was the first purpose of Sir Henry Clinton to proceed to the Raritan, and embark his troops at Brunswick, or South Amboy, for New York, but finding Washington with his army in motion in that direction, he turned to the right and took the road leading to Monmouth and Sandy Hook.

A council of war, called by Washington, to discuss the best mode of attacking the enemy on their march, was divided in opinion. Gen. Lee and others advising to avoid a general battle, but to harass the enemy upon flank and rear. Washington determined to act according to his own judgment, and sent forward a detachment to commence an attack, while he with the rest of the army followed to support the advance corps. Sir Henry Clinton, with the British army encamped near Monmouth court-house, whence they commenced their march on the twenty-eighth of June, and were attacked by the Americans. The battle became general, and lasted till night, when both armies remained on the field. The British troops withdrew during the night, and soon after proceeded to Sandy Hook, where they embarked on board a fleet for New York.

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* Sparks.

The battle of Monmouth, although favorable to the Americans, was not a decided victory; yet Congress viewed it somewhat in that light, and passed a vote of thanks to the commander-in-chief and the army. The American loss was sixty-nine killed, while the British loss was much greater, being nearly three hundred. On their march through New Jersey, the British army lost by battle, captured as prisoners, and desertion, more than twelve hundred men. The conduct of General Lee, at the battle of Monmouth, in ordering a hasty retreat of his detachment and otherwise, was severely censured by Washington; he was consequently tried by a court-martial, found guilty of the charges against him, and suspended from his command for one year. He left the service, and died four years afterward, in Philadelphia.

After the action at Monmouth, General Washington marched with his army to the Hudson river, which he crossed, and encamped at White Plains, about twenty-five miles north of the city of New York. Before crossing the river, he heard of the arrival on the coast of a French fleet, under Count d'Estaing, consisting of twelve ships-of-the-line and four frigates. No time was lost by the American general in sending a letter of congratulation to the French admiral, and proposing to co-operate with him, in plans for attacking the enemy. It was at first proposed to attack New York, by land and water; but the scheme was abandoned, and the French squadron sailed for Rhode Island, to attack the British forces there, chiefly in garrison at Newport. Various causes conspired to the failure of this expedition, by defeating the combined action of the land and naval forces. After leaving Newport, the French fleet was crippled by a storm and engagement at sea, and put into the harbor of Boston to refit, where they remained until November.

The American army was employed in various operations in the northern and eastern states, during the campaign of 1778, to guard against an apprehended attack by the British on Boston, or some other point at the eastward; but it was finally ascertained that the enemy had no design in that direction. Washington established his headquarters at Fredericksburg, thirty miles from West Point, on the borders of Connecticut, and at the close of the campaign put his army in winter-quarters at West Point and at several other places, his headquarters being at Middlebrook, in New Jersey.

Notwithstanding the flattering prospects which the alliance with France held out for the American cause, General Washington at this time had many causes of anxiety which oppressed him, and filled his mind with the most gloomy feelings. Among the most prominent subjects of anxiety and apprehension, he viewed that of the apathy and dissensions among members of Congress with alarm. The men of talent who had taken the lead in Congress, in the early period of the war, had gradually withdrawn from that body, until it had become small in numbers and comparatively feeble in counsels and resources. At no time were private jealousies and party feuds more rife or mischievous in their effects.

To those in whom he had confidence, Washington laid open his fears, and endeavored to awaken a sense of the public danger. To Benjamin Harrison, of Virginia, he thus writes, on the 30th of December, 1778: "I confess to you that I feel more real distress on account of the present appearances of things, than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute. But Providence has heretofore taken us up, when all other means and hope seemed to be departing from us. In this I will confide."

A project for conquering Canada was at this time entertained in Congress; but Washington, being requested to communicate his sentiments on the subject, replied in a long letter to Congress, showing that the plan was impracticable, requiring resources in troops and money which were not to be had; also, that there were political reasons why it would be against the future interests of the United States for Canada to be restored to France, as would probably be the case if conquered by the allied forces of France and America. He afterward, in December, 1777, visited Philadelphia; and on a more full discussion of the subject with a committee of Congress, the Canada scheme was given up. The French government was also decidedly opposed to it, and it was the policy of that court that Canada and Nova Scotia should remain in the power of Great Britain.*

The winter and spring of 1779 passed away without the occurrence of any remarkable event. The British remained within their lines at New York, apparently making no preparation for any enterprise of magnitude. General Washington, in the meantime, turned his attention to the fitting out of an expedition against the hostile Indians in the state of New York. General Sullivan was despatched with a large force to the Susquehannah river, and was completely successful in subduing the Indians.

Washington removed his headquarters to New Windsor, a few miles above West Point, distributing his army chiefly in and near the highlands of the Hudson river, but stationing a force below, to check any sudden incursion of the enemy. Washington at this time resolved upon an attack on the strong British post at Stony Point, on the Hudson river, and intrusted the enterprise to General Wayne. That officer stormed the works on the night of the 15th of July, with a body of picked men, and the assault was successful in all its parts. The number of prisoners captured by the Americans was 543, and the number killed on the side of the British was 63; while the American loss was 15 killed, and 83 wounded.

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* Sparks.

The campaign of 1779 having terminated, the American army went into winter-quarters; the main body in the neighborhood of Morristown, in New Jersey, and various detachments on the Hudson river and in Connecticut. The headquarters of Washington were at Morristown. A descent upon Staten island by a party of Americans under Lord Stirling, a retaliatory incursion of the enemy into New Jersey, and a skirmish near White Plains, were the only military events during the winter.

In April, 1780, the marquis de Lafayette arrived at Boston from France, with the cherring intelligence that the French government had fitted out an armament of naval and land forces, which might soon be expected in the United States. On the 10th of July, the French fleet arrived at Newport, in Rhode Island. The armament consisted of seven or eight ships-of-the-line, two frigates, two bombs, and upward of five thousand men. The fleet was commanded by De Ternay, and the army by Count de Rochambeau. The general and troops were directed by the French government to be in all cases under the command of General Washington.

Having a decided naval superiority, the British fleet, under Admiral Arbuthnot, blockaded the French squadron in the harbor of Newport, and Rochambeau's army was obliged to remain there for its protection. This state of things continued through the season, and no military enterprise was undertaken. Both parties stood on the defensive, watching each other's motions, and depending on the operations of the British and French fleets. General Washington encamped on the west side of the Hudson, below Orangetown, or Tappan, on the borders of New Jersey, which station he held till winter.

A conference was held between the commanders of the two allied armies, being suggested by Rochambeau, and readily assented to by Washington. They met at Hartford, in Connecticut, on the 21st of September. During the absence of General Washington, the army was left under the command of General Greene. No definite plan of operations could be agreed upon between the American and French commanders, as a naval superiority was essential to any effectual enterprise by land, and the French fleet was inferior to that of the British naval force on the American station.

At this time, General Arnold held the command at West Point, and other fortified posts on the Hudson river, in the highlands. On Washington's return to West Point from the conference with the French commander at Hartford, he was filled with astonishment at the discovery of a plot which had been formed between General Arnold and Sir Henry Clinton, to deliver up the American post to the enemy — the agent employed by the British general being Major John André, adjutant-general in the British army. On the detection of his treachery, Arnold fled to a British sloop-of-war in the Hudson river, immediately after the arrival of Washington at West Point, on the 25th of September. Major André had been taken by the Americans, and was soon after removed to the headquarters of the army at Tappan.

On discovering the treason of Arnold, Washington took immediate measures to secure the posts. Orders were despatched to all the principal officers, and every precaution was taken. It was soon ascertained by Washington that no other officer in the American army was implicated in the conspiracy of Arnold; and he forthwith ordered a court of inquiry, consisting of a board of general officers, for the trial of Major André. Various papers were laid before the board, which met on the twenty-ninth of September, and André himself was questioned and desired to make such statements and explanations as he chose. After a full investigation, the board reported the essential facts which had appeared, with their opinion that he was a spy and ought to suffer death. General Washington approved this decision, and Major André was executed at Tappan, on the second of October. He met his fate with composure and dignity.

While André's case was pending, Sir Henry Clinton used every effort in his power to rescue him from his fate. He wrote to General Washington, and endeavored to show that he could not be regarded as a spy, inasmuch as he came on shore at the request of an American general, and afterward acted by his direction. Connected with all the circumstances, this argument could have no weight. There was no stronger trait in the character of Washington than humanity; the misfortunes and sufferings of others touched him keenly; and his feelings were deeply moved at the part he was compelled to act, in consenting to the death of André; yet, justice to the office he held, and to the cause for which his countrymen were shedding their blood, left him no alternative.*

While these operations were going on at the north, all the intelligence from the southern states showed that the American cause was in a gloomy condition in that quarter. The British forces under Lord Cornwallis were overrunning the Carolinas, and preparations were making in New York to detach a squadron with troops to fall upon Virginia. The city of Charleston had been taken by the British in May, 1780, and the American army of six thousand, under General Lincoln, stationed there, surrendered prisoners-of-war. The defeat of General Gates near Camden, in South Carolina, in August, was a heavy blow to the Americans. Congress requested General Washington to appoint an officer to succeed Gates in the command of the southern army. With his usual discrimination and judgment, he selected General Greene, who repaired to the theatre of action, in which he was so eminently distinguished during the subsequent years of the war.

Congress at length adopted the important measures, in regard to the army which Washington had earnestly and repeatedly advised. They decreed that all the troops thenceforward to be raised, should be enlisted to serve during the war; and that all the officers who continued in the service to the end of the war, should be entitled to half-pay for life. Washington ever believed, that, if this system had been pursued from the beginning, it would have shortened the war, or at least have caused a great diminution of the expense. Unfortunately the states did not comply with the former part of the requisition, but adhered to the old method of filling up their quotas with men raised for three years, and for shorter terms. The extreme difficulty of procuring recruits, was the reason assigned for persevering in this practice.

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* Sparks.

The army went into winter-quarters at the end of November; the Pennsylvania line near Morristown, the New Jersey regiments at Pompton, and the eastern troops in the Highlands. The headquarters of the commander-in-chief were at New Windsor, on the Hudson river. The French army remained at Newport, Rhode Island, except the duke de Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon, in Connecticut.*

Washington felt with infinite regret, the succession of abortive projects throughout the campaign of 1780. In that year he had indulged the hope of terminating the war. In a letter to a friend, he wrote as follows: "We are now drawing to a close an inactive campaign, the beginning of which appeared pregnant with events of a very favorable complexion. I hoped, but I hoped in vain, that a prospect was opening which would enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life."

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"But alas! these prospects, flattering as they were, have proved delusory; and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress. We have been half of our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form them. We have lived upon expedients until we can live no longer. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system and economy. It is in vain, however, to look back; nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers. But to suppose that this great revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by state supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is, in my opinion, absurd."

A dangerous mutiny broke out in January, 1781, among the Pennsylvania troops stationed near Morristown, which was suppressed by the prudence and good management of Gen. Wayne, acting under the advice of Washington, and aided by a committee of Congress. The latter proposed terms to the revolters, which were accepted. This mutiny was followed by a similar revolt of the New Jersey troops, which was promptly put down by an armed force under Gen. Howe, by direction of Washington. Two of the ringleaders were tried by a court-martial and shot. By this summary proceeding, the spirit of mutiny in the army was subdued

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* Sparks.

Colonel John Laurens, having been appointed on a mission to France, to obtain a loan and military supplies, Washington wrote a letter to that gentleman, in support of the application of Congress, which was first presented by the commissioner to Dr. Franklin, and afterward laid before the French king and cabinet. The French government having determined to grant the aid requested, previous to the arrival of Colonel Laurens, suggested that the money to be appropriated for the army, should be left at the disposal of General Washington.

On the first of May, 1781, Gen. Washington commenced a military journal, from which the following is an extract: "I begin at this epoch a concise journal of military transactions, &c. I lament not having attempted it from the commencement of the war, in aid of my memory; and wish the multiplicity of matter which continually surrounds me, and the embarrassed state of our affairs, which is momentarily calling the attention to perplexities of one kind or another, may not defeat altogether, or so interrupt my present intention and plans, as to render it of little avail."

After briefly sketching the wants and condition of the army at the time, he adds: "In a word, instead of having anything in readiness to take the field, we have nothing; and instead of having the prospect of a glorious and offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered and gloomy prospect of a defensive one; unless we should receive a powerful aid of ships, troops, and money, from our generous allies, and these at present are too contingent to build upon."

While the Americans were suffering the complicated calamities which introduced the year 1781, their adversaries were carrying on the most extensive plan of operations against them which had ever been attempted. The war raged in that year, not only in the vicinity of the British headquarters at New York, but in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and in Virginia.

While the war raged in Virginia, the governor thereof, its representatives in Congress, and other influential citizens, urged his return, in defence of his native state. But, considering America as his country, and the general safety as his object, he deemed it of more importance to remain on the Hudson. In Washington's disregard of property, when in competition with national objects, he was in no respect partial to his own. While the British were in the Potomac, they sent a flag on shore to his estate at Mount Vernon requiring a fresh supply of provisions. To save the buildings from destruction his agent granted the supply of provisions required by the enemy. For this he received a severe reprimand from the general, who in a letter to the agent observed, that "it would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard, that in consequence of your noncompliance with the request of the British, they had burnt my house, and laid my plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshment to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

Though, in conducting the war, General Washington often acted on the Fabian system, by evacuating, retreating, and avoiding decisive engagements, yet this was much more the result of necessity than of choice. His uniform opinion was in favor of energetic offensive operations, as the most effectual means of bringing the war to a termination. On this principle he planned attacks, in almost every year, on some one or other of the British armies or strong posts in the United States. He endeavored, from year to year, to stimulate the public mind to some great operation, but was never properly supported. In the years 1778, '79, and '80, the projected operations with the French, as has been related, entirely miscarried. The idea of ending the war by some decisive military exploit, continually occupied his active mind. To insure success, a naval superiority on the coast, and a loan of money, were indispensably necessary. To obtain these necessary aids, the French government were applied to, as already stated. His most Christian majesty (Louis XVI.) gave his American allies a subsidy of six millions of livres, and became their security for ten millions more, borrowed in Holland. A naval co-operation was promised, and a conjunct expedition against their common foes projected.*

To mature the plan for the campaign, and to communicate personally with the French commanders, General Washington made a journey to Newport. He left headquarters on the second of March, and was absent nearly three weeks. The citizens of Newport received him with a public address, expressive of their attachment and gratitude for his services. A second meeting for consultation took place between the American and French commanders, at Wethersfield, in Connecticut, on the twenty-second of May. The two principal objects considered were, first, a southern expedition to act against the enemy in Virginia; secondly, a combined attack on New York. The French commander leaned to the former, but he yielded to the stronger reasons for the latter, which was decidedly preferred by General Washington. It was believed that Sir Henry Clinton's force in New York had been so much weakened by detachments, that the British general would be compelled either to sacrifice that place and its dependencies, or recall part of his troops from the south to defend them.

It was therefore agreed that Count de Rochambeau should march with the French army, as soon as possible, from Newport, and form a junction with the American army near the Hudson river.

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* Ramsay.

The attention of Washington was but partially taken up with the affairs under his own eye. He held a constant correspondence with Generals Greene and Lafayette, who kept him informed of the operations at the south, and asked his advice and directions. Other sections of the country, also, required and received his care and attention.

On the sixth of July, the French army formed a junction with the American forces on the Hudson, a few miles north of the city of New York. The French army, which had marched in four divisions from Providence, by way of Hartford, occupied the left, in a single line extending to the river Bronx. The Americans encamped in two lines, with their right resting on the Hudson.

Preparations were made for an attack on New York, and Washington pushed forward with the main army to within four miles of King's bridge, but finally fell back to Dobb's ferry, at which place the two armies continued six weeks. The American commander, observing how tardily his call on the respective states for troops was responded to, resolved not to make an attack until the arrival of the French fleet, under Count de Grasse, from the West Indies, then daily expected. At length, in August, he received a letter from De Grasse, informing him that he was about to sail with his whole fleet, and 3,200 land troops, for the Chesapeake. Washington at once resolved to abandon the project of an attack upon New York, and, with the cordial co-operation of Count de Rochambeau, proceeded without delay toward Virginia, with the whole of the French army, and as many Americans as could be spared from the posts on the Hudson. Washington and De Rochambeau preceded the army, and reached Lafayette's headquarters, at Williamsburg, Virginia, on the fourteenth of September, where, soon after, the whole army arrived. On his way, Washington made a flying visit to his seat at Mount Vernon, for the first time in six years, so completely had he devoted himself to the service of his country.

The French fleet under Count de Grasse, consisting of twenty-six ships-of-the-line and several frigates, entered the Chesapeake, where they were joined by the French squadron from Newport. Three thousand troops, under the marquis de St. Simon, disembarked from the French fleet, ascended the James river, and joined the allied armies at Williamsburg. The whole combined forces then took up their line of march for Yorktown, where the British army, under Lord Cornwallis, was entrenched; having erected strong fortifications at that place, and at Gloucester point, on the opposite shore.

On the thirtieth of September, the allied armies completely invested Yorktown, the Americans being on the right, and the French on the left, in a semicircular line, each wing resting on York river. The post at Gloucester was invested by part of the French army and marines, with some Virginia militia. On the ninth and tenth of October, the Americans and French opened their batteries, and destroyed an English frigate and transport in the harbor. The siege lasted seventeen days, and was vigorously kept up, when, on the seventeenth of October, Lord Cornwallis proposed a cessation of hostilities, and the appointment of a commission to conclude upon terms for surrendering the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester. The proposition was accepted by General Washington, commissioners appointed, terms of surrender settled; and the articles were signed on the nineteenth of October, 1781.

On the afternoon of the day on which the capitulation was signed, the garrison marched out, and laid down their arms. The soldiers were surrendered to Washington, and the shipping in the harbor to the count de Grasse. The number of prisoners was over seven thousand. The British lost, during the siege, between five and six hundred killed; the Americans about three hundred. The allied army consisted of about seven thousand American continental troops, five thousand French, and four thousand militia. The British force was only about half that of the allies; and doubtless Lord Cornwallis would have abandoned Yorktown before its investment, had he not confidently expected reinforcements from New York. On the very day of the surrender of Cornwallis, Sir Henry Clinton left New York with seven thousand men, on board of a fleet, to reinforce the former; but on reaching the capes of the Chesapeake, he heard of the capture of Yorktown, and returned to New York.

The surrender of the British army at Yorktown was the last important military operation of the war of the Revolution. It was generally considered throughout the country as decisive of the contest in favor of the American cause. The year 1781 (says Ramsay) terminated, in all parts of the United States, in favor of the Americans. It began with weakness in Carolina, mutiny in New Jersey, and devastation in Virginia; nevertheless, at its close, the British were confined in their strongholds in or near New York, Charleston, and Savannah, and their whole army in Virginia was captured.

Washington endeavored, but in vain, to induce the count de Grasse to remain and assist in the reduction of Charleston; he pleaded special engagements in the West Indies, whence he sailed immediately, leaving with Rochambeau the three thousand land-troops he brought with him. The French army cantoned during the winter at Williamsburg, in Virginia, whither the prisoners taken at Yorktown were marched; and the main body of the American army returned to its late position in New Jersey and upon the Hudson. A detachment, under General St. Clair, was sent to the south, to strengthen the army of General Greene. The French army remained in Virginia until the summer of 1782, when they joined the Americans on the Hudson. On the cessation of hostilities, they embarked from Boston for St. Domingo, in December, 1782.

Vigilant measures were adopted by Washington for the campaign of

1782; but fortunately they were unnecessary, for active hostilities soon after ceased. In the southern states some skirmishes took place; but these combats were chiefly partisan, carried on between whigs and tories.

General Washington left Yorktown on the fifth of November, and hastened to Eltham, where his wife was attending the death-bed of her only son, Mr. Custis. He remained there a few days, to mingle his grief with the relatives of Mr. Custis, who died at the age of twenty-eight, leaving four young children, the two youngest of whom, a son and daughter, were adopted by the general, and they resided in his family till the end of his life. From Eltham he proceeded, by the way of Mount Vernon, to Philadelphia, receiving and answering various public addresses while on his journey. He attended Congress the day after his arrival, and was greeted with a congratulatory address by the president of that body. By request, he remained some time in Philadelphia, to confer with Congress, and that he might enjoy some respite from the fatigues of war; and joined the army in the following month of April, establishing his headquarters at Newburgh, on the Hudson river.

Sir Guy Carleton, who was appointed to succeed Sir Henry Clinton in command of the British forces in America, arrived at New York early in May, 1782, bearing instructions to use all honorable means to bring about an accommodation with the United States. Both parties, therefore, ceased offensive warfare, and preparations were made to conclude terms of peace. On the twentieth of January, 1783, the preliminary treaty was signed between France, Spain, and Great Britain, and on the third of September, of the same year, definitive treaties of all the powers were signed at one time. Congress ratified the one with America on the fourteenth of January, 1784.

On the anniversary of the battle of Lexington (April 19, 1783), a cessation of hostilities was proclaimed in the American army. On the third of November following, the army was disbanded by the orders of Congress, and the three cities occupied by British troops were evacuated—Savannah in July, New York in November, and Charleston in December, of the same year.

The conclusion of peace, and the disbanding of the army, were events that reflecting men looked forward to with feelings of mingled joy and fear. Although the struggle had been brought to a triumphant issue by the United States, the country was impoverished. Much of the territory had been laid waste, commerce was nearly annihilated, a heavy burden of debt incurred by the war was weighing upon the people, and the circulating medium of paper-money had become so utterly worthless, that, by a decree of Congress, its functions were terminated. Added to this, an army of about ten thousand men were large creditors to Congress, their pay being greatly in arrears. It was manifest that Congress was unable to meet the claims of the soldiers, and could only recommend their case to their respective states.

In the month of December, 1782, the officers in the army resolved to memorialize Congress upon the subject of their grievances, proposing that the half-pay for life should be commuted for a specific sum, and requesting government to give security for the fulfilment of its engagements. Congress had a stormy debate upon the subject; but as nine states could not be obtained to vote the commutation proposition, the whole matter was dropped. This neglect of Congress to provide for their wants, produced a violent ferment among the officers, and through them the whole army became excited, and many minds among them determined upon coercive measures. In the midst of this ferment, an anonymous notice for a meeting of the general and field-officers, and a commissioned officer from each company, was circulated in the camp, accompanied with a letter, or address, complaining of their great hardships, and asserting that their country, instead of relieving them, "trampled upon their rights, disdained their cries, and insulted their distresses."

Fortunately, Washington was in the camp, and, with his usual promptness and wisdom, called a general meeting of all the officers, in place of the irregular one. He condemned the tone of the letter, as implying a proposal either to desert their country or turn their arms against her, and then gave them the strongest pledges that he would use his utmost power to induce Congress to grant their demands. His address was a feeling one, and appealed directly to their patriotism and the nobler sentiments of the heart. When he had concluded, he immediately retired from the meeting. The deliberations of the officers were exceedingly brief, and resulted in the adoption of resolutions, thanking the commander-in-chief for the course he had pursued, and expressing their unabated attachment to him, and confidence in the justice and good faith of Congress. They then separated, and, with hearts glowing with warmer patriotism, resolved still longer to endure privations for their beloved country. Congress soon after made arrangements for granting the officers full pay for five years, instead of half-pay for life, and four months full pay for the army, in part payment of arrearages. But as there were no funds to make this payment immediately, it required all the address of Washington to induce the soldiers to quietly return to their homes.

On the 24th of March, 1783, a letter was received from Lafayette, announcing the signing of the preliminary treaty; and Sir Guy Carleton gave official notice of the same soon after. In June, Washington wrote a circular letter to the governors of the states, having for its theme the general welfare of the country, in which he exhibited great ability, and the most truthful features of genuine patriotism. During the summer, many of the troops went home on furlough, and the commander-in-chief was employed, with Congress, in arranging a peace-establishment, and making preparations for the evacuation of New York by the British troops. On the eighteenth of October, Congress issued a proclamation, discharging the troops from further service; and thus, in effect, the continental army was disbanded. This proclamation was soon followed by General Washington's Farewell Address to the Army, November 2, 1783; an address replete with sound wisdom and evidences of a virtuous attachment to the men and the cause with whom, and for which, he had labored for eight years.

A small body of troops, who had enlisted for a definite period, were retained in the service, and assembled at West Point, under General Knox. Arrangements having been made with Carleton for the evacuation and surrender of New York on the twenty-fifth of November, these troops proceeded to the city, and, as soon as the British were embarked, they entered in triumphal procession, with Governor Clinton and other civil officers of the state. The ceremonies of the day were ended by a public entertainment given by Governor Clinton, and, throughout the whole transaction, perfect order prevailed.

On the fourth of December, Washington bade a final adieu to his companions in arms. "At noon," says Marshall, "the principal officers of the army assembled at Francis's tavern, in New York, soon after which their beloved commander entered the room. His emotions were too strong to be concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to them and said: 'With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honorable.' Having drunk, he added: 'I can not come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand.' General Knox, being nearest, turned to him. Washington, incapable of utterance, grasped his hand and embraced him. In the same affectionate manner, he took leave of each succeeding officer. The tear of manly sensibility was in every eye, and not a word was articulated to interrupt the dignified silence, and the tenderness of the scene. Leaving the room, he passed through the corps of light-infantry, and walked to Whitehall, where a barge waited to convey him to Paulus's Hook. The whole company followed in mute and solemn procession, with dejected countenances, testifying feelings of delicious melancholy, which no language can describe. Having entered the barge, he turned to the company, and, waving his hat, bade them a silent adieu. They paid him the same affectionate compliment; and, after the barge had left them, returned in the same solemn manner to the place where they had assembled."

Washington then repaired to Annapolis, where Congress was in session, and, on the twenty-third of December, resigned into their hands the commission he had received from that body more than eight years before, appointing him commander-in-chief of the continental armies. In all the towns and villages through which he passed, public and private demonstrations of joy and gratitude met him on every side; and Congress resolved that the resignation of his commission should be in a public audience. A large concourse of distinguished persons were present; and, at the close of a brief address,* Washington stepped forward and handed his commission to the president (General Mifflin), who made an affectionate and appropriate reply. He then "hastened with ineffable delight" (to use his own words) to his seat at Mount Vernon, resolved there to pass the remainder of his days amid the pure and quiet pleasures of his domestic circle, enhanced a thousand-fold by the consideration that his country was free and independent, and had taken a place among the nations of the earth.†

The conclusion of the revolutionary war permitted Washington to return to those domestic scenes in which he delighted, and from which no views of ambition seem to have had the power to draw his affections. One of the greatest proofs of his patriotism was his refusal to receive any pecuniary compensation for his services as commander-in-chief during the eight years in which he had served his country in that capacity. When he accepted the appointment, he announced to Congress his determination to decline payment for his services. He simply asked the reimbursement of his expenses, an exact account of which he kept and presented to the government, drawn up by his own hand at the close of the war.‡

In the month of September, 1784, Washington made a tour to the western country, for the purpose of inspecting the lands he possessed beyond the Allegany mountains, and also of ascertaining the practicability of opening a canal between the head-waters of the rivers running eastward into the Atlantic, and those that flow westward to the Ohio. The extent of this journey was six hundred and eighty miles, which he travelled on horseback. He crossed the mountains, and examined the waters of the Monongahela river, with the special view of deciding the question in his own mind, whether the Potomac and James rivers could be connected by internal navigation with the western waters. He conversed on the subject with such intelligent persons as he met, and kept a journal in which he recorded the results of his observations and inquiries. His thoughts had been turned to this enterprise before the Revolution; and soon after returning from this western tour, in October, 1784, he communicated to the governor of Virginia the fruits of his investigations in a letter, one of the ablest, most sagacious, and most important productions of his pen. The governor laid this letter before the legislature. It was the first suggestion of the great system of internal improvements which has since been pursued in the United States.

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* Washington closed his address with the following words: "I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them into his holy keeping. Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all employment of public life."

† Lossing's War of Independence.

‡ A fac-simile of this account of Washington's public expenditures has been published in a handsome volume, by Mr. Franklin Knight, of Washington city.

The legislature of Virginia, after duly considering this letter of Washington to the governor, appointed a commission for surveys, and organized two companies called the Potomac company, and the James river company, for the purpose of carrying the plan into effect.

It may here be added, that Washington was a zealous advocate for schools and literary institutions of every kind, and sought to promote them by his public addresses and by private benefactions. In this spirit he accepted the chancellorship of William and Mary college, being earnestly solicited by the trustees.*

Washington was not long allowed to remain in retirement. To remedy the distress into which the country had been thrown by the war, and to organize a permanent plan of national government, a national convention of delegates from the several states was called, and met at Philadelphia in 1787. Having been chosen one of the delegates from Virginia, Washington was appointed to preside over the deliberations of the convention, and used his influence to cause the adoption of the constitution of the United States.

By the unanimous voice of his fellow-citizens and of the electoral colleges, he was called, in 1789, to act as president of the United States, and cheerfully lent his aid in organizing the new government. Amid all the difficulties which occurred at that period from differences of opinion among the people, many of whom were opposed to the measures proposed and adopted, the national government would probably have perished in its infancy, if it had not been for the wisdom and firmness of Washington. During his first term the French revolution commenced, which convulsed the whole political world, and which tried most severely his moderation and prudence. His conduct was a model of firm and dignified moderation. Insults were offered to his authority by the minister of the French republic (Mr. Genet) and his adherents, in official papers, in anonymous libels, and by tumultuous meetings. The law of nations was trampled under foot. No vexation could disturb the tranquillity of his mind, or make him deviate from the policy which his situation prescribed. During the whole course of that arduous struggle, his personal character gave that strength to a new magistracy which in other countries arises from ancient habits of obedience and respect. The authority of his virtue was more efficacious for the preservation of America, than the legal powers of his office. During this turbulent period he was unanimously re-elected to the presidency, in 1793, for another term, although he had expressed a wish to retire. The nation was then nearly equally divided into two great political parties, who united only on the name of Washington. Throughout the whole course of his second presidency the danger of the United States was great and imminent. The spirit of change, indeed, shook all nations. But in other countries it had to encounter ancient and strong established power; in America the government was new and weak; the people had scarcely time to recover from the effects of a recent civil war. Washington employed the horror excited by the atrocities of the French revolution for the best purposes; to preserve the internal quiet of his country; to assert the dignity and to maintain the rights of the commonwealth which he governed, against foreign enemies. He avoided war, without incurring the imputation of pusillanimity. He cherished the detestation of the best portion of his countrymen for anarchy, without weakening the spirit of liberty; and he maintained the authority of the government without infringing on the rights of the states, or abridging the privileges of the people. He raised no hopes that he did not gratify; he made no promises that he did not fulfil; he exacted proper respect due to the high office he held, and rendered to others every courtesy belonging to his high station.

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* Sparks.

Having determined to retire from the presidency at the expiration of his second term, in March, 1797, he issued in September, 1796, a farewell address to the people of the United States, which will be found in this volume, and which will remain as a permanent legacy to his countrymen through future generations, for its sentiments of patriotism, and sound maxims of political sagacity. He remained at the seat of government until the inauguration of his successor, Mr. Adams, which occasion he honored with his presence, and immediately retired to Mount Vernon to pass the remainder of his days in quiet retirement; but when, in 1798, the United States armed by sea and land, in consequence of their difficulties with France, he consented to act as lieutenant-general of the army; but was never afterward called upon to take the field, although he bore the commission until his death. On Thursday, the twelfth of December, 1799, he was seized with an inflammation in his throat, which became considerably worse the next day, and which terminated his life on Saturday, the fourteenth of the same month, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

"No man," says Colonel Knapp, in his biographical sketch, "was ever mourned so widely and sincerely as Washington. Throughout the United States, eulogies were pronounced upon his character, sermons were preached, or some mark of respect paid to his memory. It was not speaking extravagantly to say that a nation was in tears at his death. There have been popular men, who were great in their day and generation, but whose fame soon passed away. It is not so with the fame of Washington, it grows brighter by years. The writings of Washington (a portion only of which comprise eleven octavo volumes) show that he had a clear lucid mind, and will be read with pleasure for ages to come."

"General Washington," says Judge Marshall, "was rather above the common size; his frame was robust, and his constitution vigorous—capable of enduring great fatigue, and requiring a considerable degree of exercise for the preservation of his health. His exterior created in the beholder the idea of strength united with manly gracefulness.

"His manners were rather reserved than free, though they partook nothing of that dryness and sternness which accompany reserve when carried to an extreme; and on all proper occasions he could relax sufficiently to show how highly he was gratified by the charms of conversation, and the pleasures of society. His person and whole deportment exhibited an unaffected and indescribable dignity, unmingled with haughtiness, of which all who approached him were sensible; and the attachment of those who possessed his friendship, and enjoyed his intimacy, was ardent, but always respectful.

"His temper was humane, benevolent, and conciliatory; but there was a quickness in his sensibility to anything apparently offensive, which experience had taught him to watch and to correct.

"In the management of his private affairs he exhibited an exact yet liberal economy. His funds were not prodigally wasted on capricious and ill-examined schemes, nor refused to beneficial though costly improvements. They remained, therefore, competent to that extensive establishment which his reputation, added to an hospitable temper, had in some measure imposed upon him, and to those donations which real distress has a right to claim from opulence.

"In his civil administration, as in his military career, were exhibited ample and repeated proofs of that practical good sense, of that sound judgment which is perhaps the most rare, and is certainly the most valuable quality of the human mind.

"In speculation he was a real republican, devoted to the constitution of his country, and to that system of equal political rights on which it is founded. But between a balanced republic and a democracy, the difference is like that between order and chaos. Real liberty, he thought, was to be preserved only by preserving the authority of the laws, and maintaining the energy of government."

ADMINISTRATION OF WASHINGTON.

The unanimous choice of General Washington as president of the United States by the people of the United States, as expressed through the electoral colleges of the several states at the organization of the government under the constitution, after its adoption, was officially announced to the president elect, at his seat at Mount Vernon, on the 14th of April, 1789. This commission was executed by Mr. Charles Thompson, secretary of the late continental Congress, who presented to him the certificate of the secretary of the senate, stating that he was unanimously elected; the votes of the electors for president and vice-president having been counted by both houses of the first Congress under the constitution, then in session at the city of New York, on the 6th of April.

The urgency of the public business requiring the immediate attendance of the president at the seat of government, he hastened his departure, and on the second day after receiving notice of his appointment, he took leave of Mount Vernon and his family, and set out for New York, in company with Mr. Thompson and Colonel Humphreys. On his way to that city he was everywhere greeted by the people of the different places through which he passed, with the most enthusiastic and decisive evidences of attachment and respect. Although the president hastened his journey, and wished to render it private, the public feelings were too strong to be suppressed. Crowds flocked around him wherever he stopped; and corps of militia, with companies of the most respectable citizens escorted him through their respective states.

In New Jersey, after a most interesting scene at Trenton, having been received by the governor of that state, who accompanied him to Elizabethtown point, he was met by a committee of Congress, who conducted him thence to New York. The president, committee, and other gentlemen, embarked for the city in an elegant barge of thirteen oars, manned by thirteen branch pilots prepared for the purpose by the citizens of New York.

"The display of boats," says Washington, in his private journal, "which attended and joined on this occasion, some with vocal, and others with instrumental music on board, the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people, which rent the sky as I passed along the wharves, filled my mind with sensations as painful (contemplating the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) as they were pleasing."

In this manner, on the 23d of April, the man possessed of a nation's love landed at the stairs on Murray's wharf, which had been prepared and ornamented for the purpose. There he was received by the governor of New York, and conducted, with military honors, through an immense concourse of people, to the apartments provided for him. These were attended by foreign ministers, by public bodies, by political characters, and by private citizens of distinction, who pressed around him to offer their congratulations, and to express the joy which glowed in their bosoms at seeing the man in whom all confided at the head of the American empire. This day of extravagant joy was succeeded by a splendid illumination.*

The ceremonies of the inauguration having been adjusted by Congress, on the 30th of April, 1789, the president attended in the senate-chamber in order to take, in the presence of both houses, the oath prescribed by the constitution.

The session of Congress was then held in the city-hall, then called Federal hall, situated in Wall street, opposite the head of Broad street. To gratify the public curiosity, an open gallery adjoining the senate-chamber had been selected by Congress as the place in which the ceremony should take place. The oath was administered by Chancellor Livingston, of New York. Having taken it in the view of an immense concourse of people, who attested their joy by loud and repeated acclamations after the chancellor had pronounced, in a very feeling manner, "Long live George Washington, president of the United States," he returned to the senate-chamber and delivered his inaugural address.

The inaugural address of the president was replied to, on the part of the senate, by their presiding officer, John Adams, who had been elected vice-president of the United States. This reply of the senate was full of confidence in the president, and the sentiments expressed breathed the purest patriotism, and were every way worthy of that dignified body. The same may be said of the reply of the house of representatives, delivered through their speaker, Frederick A. Muhlenberg, of Pennsylvania. To both of these addresses the president rejoined in a few brief and appropriate remarks.

Eleven only of the original thirteen states had adopted the federal constitution, previous to the organization of the government by the election of president, vice-president, and members of Congress. North Carolina and Rhode Island had rejected the constitution; but finally came into the Union, the former in November, 1789, the latter in May, 1790. The electors of president and vice-president were appointed in ten of the states on the first Wednesday of January, 1789, and met to give their votes in the several states, on the first Wednesday of February, and the constitution went into operation on the first Wednesday of March, the same year. It was not, however, until the 30th of April, that the government was fully organized, by the induction of the president into office. The legislature of New York having omitted to pass a law directing the mode of choosing electors, owing to a disagreement between the two branches of the legislature, New York did not participate in the first election of president. The whole number of electoral votes given by the ten states was 69, all of which General Washington received, and 34 were received by Mr. Adams, the remaining 35 having been scattered among various candidates. By the constitution, as it originally stood, the presidential electors voted for two persons; the one receiving the highest number of votes was elected president, and the next highest, or second choice of the electors, became vice-president. A majority of the whole number of electoral votes was required for the choice of president, but not for vice-president. Mr. Adams, it will be observed, although he received the greatest number of votes next to Washington, was elected vice-president by a minority.

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* Marshall's Life of Washington.

The national government, though one of deliberate consent, encountered, from its formation, a powerful opposition. The friends of the constitution, with Washington and Adams at their head, were denominated *Federalists*, while those who had opposed the adoption of the constitution were called *Anti-Federalists*. From various causes, some of those who had supported the constitution in the national and state conventions, and otherwise, joined the opposition to the administration of Washington, among whom may be mentioned Mr. Madison, of Virginia, Mr. Langdon, of New Hampshire, Doctor Williamson, of North Carolina, Mr. Baldwin, of Georgia, and others. In the first Congress, in 1789 and 1790, there was but a small majority in favor of the measures recommended by Washington, and Hamilton, the secretary of the treasury. The anti-federalists elected John Langdon, of New Hampshire, president *pro tem.* of the senate, and Frederick A. Muhlenberg, speaker of the house of representatives, but they were chosen in the early part of the session, when party lines were not strictly drawn.

The first session of the first Congress, which was held at New York, occupied a period of nearly six months, the adjournment taking place on the 29th of September, 1789. They were employed principally in framing laws necessary to the organization of the government. In this space of time the construction of the powers intended to be given was very ably discussed. The subjects of commerce and of finance received the early and prompt attention of Congress, as well as the organization of the different departments, and of a federal judiciary system. Among the subjects strenuously debated was the president's power of appointment and removal of officers at the head of each executive department of the government, and other officers under the president. The appointment was constitutionally subject to the assent of the senate. The removal, on which point the constitution was silent, was then settled to be in the power of the president alone. A system was adopted for raising a revenue from duties on imports, and the principle was recognised of discriminating duties for the protection of American manufactures. The subject of a tonnage duty was also considered, and an act passed discriminating in favor of American vessels, owners, and navigators. Sixteen articles of amendment to the constitution were approved by Congress, in September, 1789, and recommended to the states for their adoption. Ten of these articles were approved by the requisite number of states, and thus became parts of the constitution. Two other articles, since adopted by the states, were proposed at subsequent sessions of Congress.

Soon after the adjournment of Congress the president made a tour through the eastern states. Before he commenced his journey, he selected his cabinet, namely: in September, 1789, Thomas Jefferson was appointed secretary of state; Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury; Henry Knox, secretary of war; and Edmund Randolph, attorney-general. The office of secretary of the navy did not exist until the presidency of Mr. Adams. Mr. Jefferson returned from a mission to France in November, 1789, and assumed the duties of secretary of state in March, 1790.

John Jay, of New York, was appointed chief justice of the supreme court; and John Rutledge, of South Carolina, James Wilson, of Pennsylvania, William Cushing of Massachusetts, Robert H Harrison, of Maryland, and John Blair, of Virginia, associate justices.

At the second session of the first Congress, which was held at New York, commencing in January, 1790, some of the able reports of Hamilton, as secretary of the treasury, were presented, which established the course of national policy pursued by that and various succeeding administrations. The funding of the public debt incurred by the war of the revolution, the assumption of state debts by the general government, the providing of a system of revenue from duties on imports, and an internal excise, were among the measures proposed by Hamilton, and adopted by Congress. At this session an act was passed providing for the permanent seat of the national government at the District of Columbia, and for the removal of the temporary seat of government to Philadelphia.

The third session of the same Congress was held at Philadelphia, from the first Monday of December, 1790, to March 3, 1791. To complete the financial system recommended by Hamilton, a national bank was incorporated. On this subject the cabinet and members of Congress were divided, but the act of incorporation was passed by considerable majorities, and approved by President Washington. A mint was also established for the purpose of national coinage, and at the same session the states of Vermont and Kentucky were admitted into the Union. The measures adopted by this Congress were of a highly beneficial character to the country, and had the effect to establish the national credit, and advance the public prosperity.

The second Congress met at Philadelphia, in October, 1791. There was a majority in each branch favorable to the administration. Among the measures of the session, an excise act, imposing a duty on domestic distilled spirits, similar to one passed in 1790, was adopted, and became very unpopular with the opposition to the administration. A law providing for a uniform militia system was also passed, and measures taken for a defence of the western frontiers against the Indians, who, in November, 1791, defeated a body of United States troops, under General St. Clair, near the Ohio river. A bounty was granted by law at this session, on vessels employed in the fisheries, for the encouragement of that branch of business; and an apportionment of representation in Congress was made in conformity to the census taken in 1790—the ratio fixed was 33,000 inhabitants for each representative.

The violent opposition to the excise law by a portion of the people, particularly in the interior of Pennsylvania, where meetings were held, and the revenue officers threatened with personal injury, induced Congress, in May, 1792, to pass an act authorizing the president to call out the militia to assist in executing the laws, if he should deem proper. The president being reluctant to employ military force, issued a proclamation, exhorting the people to desist from all illegal acts and meetings; but his council and warning did not produce the effect expected. The discontents continued until August, 1794, when this whiskey insurrection had assumed so serious a character in western Pennsylvania, that an army of volunteers and militia was formed, consisting of about 15,000 men, to suppress it. The insurgents did not venture to meet this force, and the rebellion ceased without conflict. No further opposition was then made to the excise law.

The second session of the second Congress, from November, 1792, to March, 1793, presents but little of interest to the reader. Much of the time was occupied in discussing the domestic and foreign relations of the country, without the adoption of any particular measures of importance. Party spirit ran high, both in Congress and among the people. The cabinet of Washington was divided, Hamilton and Knox advising federal measures, while Jefferson and Randolph generally acted in opposition to their colleagues, and in unison with the opposition in Congress, whom Mr. Jefferson denominated *Republicans*. The schism in his cabinet was a subject of extreme mortification to the president. Entertaining respect and esteem for both Jefferson and Hamilton, he was unwilling to part with either, and exerted all his influence to effect a reconciliation between them, but without success. The hostility of these distinguished men to each other sustained no diminution, and its consequences became every day more diffusive.

The French revolution had an important influence on the politics of the United States, at this time. Mr. Jefferson and his republican friends sympathized with the French nation in their struggles for liberty and their contests with other nations, while Hamilton, and his friends of the federal party, with whom Washington coincided in this respect, considered it important to the interests of the United States to maintain friendly relations with Great Britain, which power was then at war with France, and they were unwilling to sacrifice either the peace or the interests of the nation to any sympathies they might have in favor of the revolutionists of France.

In this state of public opinion, the presidential election of 1792 took place. General Washington had expressed a desire to decline a re-election, but finally yielded to the earnest wishes of his friends, to serve another term. Notwithstanding the high party feeling among the people, Washington again received the unanimous votes of the electoral colleges, 132 in number. Mr. Adams was re-elected vice-president, receiving 77 votes, and George Clinton 50, while 5 were given to other persons. Governor Clinton was the candidate of the republican party.

General Washington appeared in the senate-chamber at Philadelphia on the fourth of March, 1793, to take the oath of office on his re-election to the presidency. The oath was administered by Judge Cushing, of the supreme court, in the presence of John Langdon, president *pro tem.* of the senate, and many members of Congress.

On this occasion, the president made the following remarks:—

"I am again called upon, by the voice of my country, to execute the functions of its chief magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of the United States. Previous to the execution of any official act of the president, the constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence, that if it shall be found, during my administration of the government, I have in any instance violated, willingly or knowingly, the injunctions thereof, I may, besides incurring constitutional punishment, be subjected to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony."

In April, 1793, Citizen Genêt arrived in this country as minister from the French republic. He sought to involve the United States in a war with Great Britain, and issued commissions to vessels-of-war, to sail from American ports and cruise against the enemies of France. It appears to have been expected in France that the United States would engage on its side from treaty stipulations, or inclination against England. The president and his cabinet were unanimously of opinion that this country was not bound to take part in a war begun by France; and on the 18th of April the celebrated proclamation of neutrality, by the president, was issued, which has been the guide of the nation ever since, in affairs with foreign nations.

Mr. Genet, after this, threatened to appeal to the people, but finally, after many controversies with him, the president demanded his recall by the French government. Soon after this his commission was withdrawn, and Mr. Fauchet was appointed his successor. Mr. Genet, however, spent the remainder of his life in the United States, and married a daughter of Governor George Clinton, of New York.

Mr. Genet was said to have introduced into the United States the idea of "democratic societies," which were first formed in this country about this time, in imitation of the Jacobin clubs in Paris. After the fall of Robespierre these clubs, or secret societies, fell into disrepute, both in France and America.

When the third Congress assembled at Philadelphia, in December, 1793, the opposition to the administration succeeded in electing the speaker of the house of representatives, which body was afterward nearly equally divided on great political questions. In the senate, the vice-president, Mr. Adams, repeatedly settled important questions by his casting vote.

On the 16th of December, the secretary of state, Mr. Jefferson, in compliance with a resolution of the house of representatives of February 23, 1791, made to Congress his celebrated report on the commercial relations of the United States with foreign nations. This is one of the ablest documents that has ever emanated from Mr. Jefferson. He made an additional report on the 30th of December, communicating certain documents of foreign governments, which was his last official act as secretary of state. Agreeably to a notice which he gave the president, some months previous, he resigned his office and seat in the cabinet, December 31, 1793, and retired to his residence in Virginia.

The president appointed Edmund Randolph to succeed Mr. Jefferson as secretary of state, and William Bradford, of Pennsylvania, to succeed Mr. Randolph as attorney-general.

On the 4th of January, 1794, Mr. Madison introduced in the house a series of resolutions on commercial affairs, in conformity with the report of Mr Jefferson. They gave rise to a long and acrimonious debate, but were finally postponed. A resolution, however, to cut off all intercourse with Great Britain, passed the house by a small majority, but was defeated in the senate by the casting vote of the vice-president. The important subjects suggested in the president's message, and in official reports, were under consideration in the two branches of Congress, from the beginning of January to the 16th of April. The excitement was high among a large portion of the people, in favor of France. They insisted that the friends of France should declare themselves by wearing the national cockade.

They insisted, also, on war with England. In Congress, the war of words disclosed a state of feeling which the decorum of the place hardly restrained from full expression.

The conduct of the British government at this time added to the difficulties of the administration. The western forts on Lake Erie and its vicinity were still occupied by the British, contrary to the treaty of 1783. American vessels were seized on their way to French ports, and American seamen were impressed. The president, after many remonstrances with the British government, was sensible that a crisis was approaching which would involve the United States in a war with England, unless the calamity could be averted by negotiation. Washington, therefore, concluded to send a special envoy to England, and in April, 1794, selected John Jay, then chief justice of the supreme court, for that purpose. Mr. Jay arrived in England in June, 1794, and in November following a treaty with Great Britain was signed. It arrived in the United States on the 7th of March, 1795, and was ratified by the senate on the 24th of June, by precisely the constitutional majority (two thirds), after much opposition, and an investigation continued from the 9th of the same month. As this treaty was considered favorable to Great Britain, although it was the best that Mr. Jay could obtain, the publication of it in this country tended to heighten the asperity of political parties, and to increase the feelings of hostility toward England which were entertained by the opposition to the administration. The clamor against the treaty, however, gradually subsided, and addresses from all quarters poured in upon the president, principally from his political friends, congratulating him upon the fortunate issue of the mission.

In consequence of a decision of the supreme court, in a suit instituted by a citizen of South Carolina against the state of Georgia, and the action of the state of Massachusetts, on a suit being commenced against that state, an amendment was proposed, and carried at the first session of the third Congress, which was afterward ratified by three fourths of the several states, declaring that, "the judicial power of the United States should not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States, by citizens of another state, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state." This forms the 11th article of the amendments to the constitution.

During the summer of 1794, a successful campaign was carried on against the Indians, by the American troops under General Wayne, who defeated a large body of Indian warriors in a battle, in August of that year, on the banks of the Maumee, in Ohio. General Wayne soon afterward negotiated a treaty with all the tribes of the northwest; and, in conformity to Mr. Jay's treaty, the surrender of the western posts which had been so long retained by the British, gave assurance of continued peace on the frontier.

In 1794, the French government requested the recall of Gouverneur Morris, the minister from the United States to France, which request Washington complied with, and appointed James Monroe his successor. Mr. Morris had expressed his disapprobation of the revolutionary proceedings in France. In September, 1796, the president recalled Mr. Monroe, and appointed Charles Cotesworth Pinckney to succeed him.

At the close of the year 1794, General Knox resigned his place as secretary of war, and retired to Boston. His successor was Timothy Pickering, who was appointed on the 2d of January, 1795; he was, previous to that time, postmaster-general.

Mr. Hamilton resigned, as secretary of the treasury, on the 31st of January, 1795, and was succeeded on the 2d of February, by Oliver Wolcott, of Connecticut. In consequence of the death of Mr. Bradford, attorney-general, in August, 1795, the president appointed Charles Lee, of Virginia, his successor, December 10, 1795. At the same time, Timothy Pickering was appointed secretary of state, in place of Edmund Randolph, who had resigned the preceding August. James M'Henry was appointed secretary of war, January 27, 1796.

When the third Congress assembled, at their second session, in November, 1794, it appeared that, while the party in favor of the administration had been strengthened in the senate by recent events, in the house of representatives the opposition still continued to be the most powerful. In replying to the president's speech, the address of the house omitted to notice those parts which censured self-created societies, by which term the democratic clubs were supposed to be intended; also the victory of Gen. Wayne and the policy observed by the executive in its intercourse with foreign nations. An attempt to censure the "self-created societies," failed by the casting vote of the speaker. A bill, however, was passed, authorizing the president to station military force in the western counties of Pennsylvania, and an appropriation, exceeding one million of dollars, was made to defray the expenses of the insurrection.

The report of the secretary of the treasury, on the national finances, was the last official act of Colonel Hamilton; he soon after retired from office, as already stated. His report embraced the digest of a plan on the basis of the actual revenues for the further support of the public credit. In conformity with this plan, a bill was carried, notwithstanding a strenuous opposition, through both houses, establishing a sinking fund, composed of the surplus revenue, the bank dividends, and the proceeds of the public lands, for the redemption of the national debt. On the third of March, 1795, the constitutional term of the third Congress expired, and this important session was ended.

The senate was convened by the president, on the 8th of June following, for the purpose of considering Mr. Jay's treaty with Great Britain, which was ratified by that body, as already stated, on the 24th of the same month. The president arrived in Philadelphia, from Mount Vernon. on the 11th of August, and on the next day the question of the immediate ratification of the treaty was brought before the cabinet. The resolution was adopted to ratify the treaty immediately, the secretary of state, Mr. Randolph, only, dissenting; and this opinion of the cabinet was confirmed by the president.

"If the ratification of the treaty," says Judge Marshall, "increased the number of its open advocates, by stimulating the friends of the administration to exert themselves in its defence, it seemed also to give increased acrimony to the opposition. Previous to the mission of Mr. Jay, charges against the chief magistrate, though frequently insinuated, had seldom been directly made. That mission visibly affected the decorum which had been usually observed toward him, and the ratification of the treaty brought into view sensations which had long been ill concealed. The calumnies with which he was assailed were not confined to his public conduct; even his qualities as a man were the subjects of detraction. That he had violated the constitution in negotiating a treaty without the previous advice of the senate, and that he had drawn from the treasury for his private use more than the salary annexed to his office, were unblushingly asserted.

"Though the secretary of the treasury denied that the appropriations made by the legislature had ever been exceeded, the atrocious charge was still confidently repeated. With the real public the confidence felt in the integrity of the chief magistrate remained unshaken.

"When possessed of the entire fact, the public viewed with just indignation this attempt to defame a character which was the nation's pride. Americans felt themselves affected by this atrocious calumny on their most illustrious citizen, and its propagators were frowned into silence."

Many of those embarrassments in which the government, from its institution, had been involved, were now ended, or approaching their termination.

The opposition to the laws, which had so long been made in western Pennsylvania, existed no longer. Peace had been made with the Indian tribes at the west and the south. After the failure of several attempts to obtain a peace with the regency of Algiers, Colonel Humphreys, the minister of the United States to Portugal, to whom full powers were granted, appointed Mr. Donaldson to transact this business; and a treaty with Algiers was negotiated on terms which, though disadvantageous, were the best that could be obtained. The difficulties with Spain, which had been of long continuance, were adjusted by a treaty concluded by Mr. Pinckney, the United States minister, with his catholic majesty, in October, 1795, in which the claims of the United States on the important points of boundary and the navigation of the Mississippi were fully conceded.

The fourth Congress commenced their first session in December, 1795.

While the majority in the senate in favor of the administration had increased, the result of the last elections had again placed a majority in the house of representatives in opposition. This was manifest from the answers returned by the respective houses to the president's speech. That of the senate, adopted fourteen to eight, expressed an entire approbation of the conduct of the executive. The answer reported by a committee of the house, contained expressions of *undiminished* confidence in the president. But a motion was made to strike out this part; and in the debate on this motion, some of the members did not hesitate to say, that their confidence in the chief magistrate had diminished; and it was evident that a majority were in favor of the motion. The answer was. therefore, recommitted, and so varied as to meet the unanimous assent of the house.*

Although in the minority on many questions, the friends of the administration succeeded in electing Jonathan Dayton, a distinguished federalist of New Jersey, speaker of the house of representatives.

Mr. Monroe, the United States minister to the French republic, having presented to that government the American colors, which were placed with those of France, in the hall of the national convention, in Paris, Mr. Adet, who was appointed minister to the United States to succeed Mr. Fauchet, was directed to present to the United States government the flag of the French republic. He arrived in the United States in June, 1795, but did not present the flag in a formal manner until the first of January, 1796, when he delivered it to the president, together with a letter to Congress from the committee of public safety in France. The speech of Mr. Adet on this occasion drew from Washington the memorable reply, commencing as follows: "Born, sir, in a land of liberty; having early learned its value; having engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; having, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my country; my anxious recollections, my sympathetic feelings, and my best wishes, are irresistibly attracted, whensoever, in any country, I see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom."†

The address of Mr. Adet, and the answer of the president, were transmitted to Congress, with the letter from the committee of safety, by the president, on the 4th of January. The colors of France he directed to be deposited among the archives of the United States. Both houses of Congress adopted resolutions expressive of their good will and friendship for the French republic.

In February, 1796, the treaty with Great Britain was returned, in the form advised by the senate, ratified by his Britannic majesty. The president, in pursuance of his duty, issued his proclamation on the last of February, on the subject, and requiring from all persons its observance and execution. For the information of Congress, a copy of this proclamation was transmitted to each house on the first of March.

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* Pitkin's History of the United States.

† See Marshall's Life of Washington.

The republican or democratic party in the house of representatives, who had denied the right of the president to negotiate a treaty of commerce, expressed their dissatisfaction at his course in issuing this proclamation before the sense of the house had been declared on the obligation of the instrument. On the second of March, therefore, Mr. Livingston, of New York, laid upon the table a resolution requesting of the president a copy of the instructions to Mr. Jay, together with the correspondence and other documents relative to the treaty with Great Britain negotiated by him. This motion was vehemently debated, and, after some days, carried, by a majority of 57 to 35. The president answered, with his accustomed coolness and dignity, stating his reasons why the house of representatives, which has no part in the treaty-making power, can not be constitutionally entitled to the papers called for; and concluded with saying: "A just regard to the constitution and to the duty of my office, under all the circumstances of this case, forbid a compliance with your request."

This refusal of the president was received with an indignation which the majority were at no pains to conceal. The same spirit was widely disseminated through the country; but public opinion had undergone an important change. Popular meetings were held on the subject, and, though many of the provisions of the treaty were thought to be objectionable, it was believed that a majority, composed of the most intelligent citizens, were in favor of carrying the treaty into effect, in good faith. The popular sentiment was felt in the house of representatives. The debate in that body was very able and interesting. Among the most celebrated speeches made on the occasion, was that of Fisher Ames, in support of the treaty. Many other distinguished members took part in the debate, such as Roger Griswold, R. G. Harper, Theodore Sedgwick, and William Smith, on the side of the administration; and Edward Livingston, James Madison, Albert Gallatin, and William B. Giles, in opposition. The final question in the house, in favor of laws for carrying the treaty into effect, was carried by a majority of three only, 51 to 48.

The fourth Congress, after continuing their first session until the 1st of June, 1796, adjourned to the first Monday of December following. Besides the measures referred to, many other important acts were adopted; among others, agencies were established among the Indian tribes; provision was made for the sale of the public lands; and an act was passed for the protection and relief of American seamen. The state of Tennessee was admitted into the Union on the last day of the session.

In the spring of 1796, Rufus King was appointed minister to Great Britain, in the place of Thomas Pinckney, who, at his own request, was permitted to return home. During a residence of several years in London, Mr. King maintained the rights of the country with great ability and firmness and sustained a high character among the diplomatic corps at the British court.*

The relations of the United States with France continued a subject of anxiety. The treaty negotiated with England by Mr. Jay, and the president's proclamation of neutrality, were regarded with much disfavor by the French government, and they issued several decrees by which American vessels were confiscated, in violation of the treaty of commerce. The president being dissatisfied with the course of Mr. Monroe, the American minister to France, in not urging the rights of his countrymen with sufficient vigor, he was recalled, as already stated, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney appointed in his place. Mr. Monroe was very popular in France, and on taking his leave of the government, mutual addresses were delivered. The address of the president of the directory, expressing his regret at parting with Mr. Monroe, was calculated to flatter the people of the United States, while it severely censured their government. Mr. Pinckney was permitted to reside at Paris until about the first of February, 1797, when the French directory gave him written orders to quit the territories of the republic, and he retired to Holland.

The third election of president engaged the national attention after the adjournment of Congress. General Washington was earnestly solicited to be a candidate for re-election, but positively declined. In September, 1796, he announced his intention to the people in his memorable "*Farewell Address*."† In this document he made a last effort to impress upon his countrymen those great political truths which had been the guides of his own administration, and could alone, in his opinion, form a sure and solid basis for the happiness, the independence, and the liberty of the United States.

The sentiments of veneration with which this address was generally received, were manifested in almost every part of the Union. Some of the state legislatures directed it to be inserted at large in their journals; and nearly all of them passed resolutions expressing their respect for the president, their high sense of his exalted services, and the emotions with which they contemplated his retirement from office.‡

When this address appeared, announcing the resolution of Washington to retire, the determination of his fellow-citizens had been unequivocally manifested in favor of his continuance in office, and it was believed to be apparent, that his election would again be unanimous, if he had consented to serve for a third term.

The two great parties in the United States were now at once arrayed against each other on the question of the presidential election. By the federalists, Mr. John Adams and Mr. Thomas Pinckney, the late minister to Great Britain, were supported as president and vice-president; while the whole force of the opposite party was exerted in favor of Mr. Jefferson.

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* Pitkin.

† See page 79.

‡ Marshall.

On the subject of vice-president, the republicans, or democrats, were not united. The result of the election was as follows: John Adams, 71; Thomas Jefferson, 68; Thomas Pinckney, 59; Aaron Burr, 30; Samuel Adams, 15; Oliver Ellsworth, 11; George Clinton, 7; John Jay, 5; James Iredell, 3; George Washington, 2; J. Henry, 2; S. Johnson, 2; Charles C. Pinckney, 1. Total number of electoral votes, 138—each elector voting for two persons. Mr. Adams was therefore elected president, and Mr. Jefferson vice-president, for four years from the fourth of March, 1797.

In November, while the election was pending, and parties were so nearly balanced that neither scale could be perceived to preponderate, the French minister to this country, Mr. Adet, addressed a letter to the secretary of state, which he also caused to be immediately published in the newspapers, reproaching the federal administration with violating those treaties with France which had secured the independence of the United States, with ingratitude to France, and with partiality to England. Mr. Adet also announced the orders of his government to suspend his ministerial functions with that of the United States. This suspension of his functions, however, was not to be regarded "as a rupture between France and the United States, but as a mark of just discontent, which was to last until the government of the United States returned to sentiments and to measures more conformable to the interests of the alliance, and to the sworn friendship between the two nations."

Whatever motives might have impelled Mr. Adet to make this open and direct appeal to the American people, in the critical moment of their election of a chief magistrate, it does not appear in any material degree to have influenced that election.

On the 7th of December, 1796, Washington met Congress for the last time. His address was comprehensive, temperate, and dignified. It presented a full and clear view of the situation of the United States, and recommended certain great national measures in the utility of which he felt a confidence; concluding with his congratulations on the success of the experiment of the form of government under the constitution, and his prayers for its perpetuity.

The answers of both houses to this speech, notwithstanding the conflict of parties, were adopted nearly unanimously. Both expressed their grateful sense of the eminent services he had rendered his country, their extreme regret at his retiring from office, and their ardent wishes for his future personal happiness. Perfect unanimity, however, did not prevail in the house of representatives. Mr. Giles, of Virginia, said: "If he stood alone in the opinion, he would declare that he was not convinced that the administration of the government for these six years, had been wise and firm. He did not regret the president's retiring from office. He hoped he would retire, and enjoy the happiness that awaited his retirement. He believed it would more conduce to that happiness that he should retire, than if he should remain in office." In this opinion of Mr. Giles, only eleven concurred, and with him voted against the answer.*

On the 19th of January, 1797, the president, agreeably to the intimation in his speech at the opening of the session, communicated to Congress the state of the relations of the country with the French republic. It contained not only an able review, but an ample refutation of the various charges made by France, as well as a complete justification of the conduct of President Washington toward that nation. This exposition, however, created no change in the conduct of France, and produced little effect on the parties in America.†

On the 4th of March, 1797, the administration of President Washington closed—a period to which he had looked forward with inexpressible pleasure. After witnessing the inauguration of his successor, he withdrew from Philadelphia to Mount Vernon, to spend the remainder of his days in retirement.

During his administration, all the disputes between the United States and foreign nations had been adjusted, with the exception of those of France ; at home, public and private credit was restored—ample provision made for the security and ultimate payment of the public debt—commerce had experienced unexampled prosperity—American tonnage had nearly doubled—the products of agriculture had found a ready market—the exports had increased from nineteen millions to more than fifty-six millions of dollars—the imports in about the same proportion—and the amount of revenues from imports had exceeded the most sanguine calculations. The prosperity of the country had been, indeed, without example, notwithstanding great losses from belligerent depredations.‡

At this day, the conduct and character of Washington are spoken of with respect and veneration by most men. We have seen several sorts of administration of public affairs since his time ; it is not too soon to consider calmly and dispassionately, the worth of that conducted by him.

To the high responsibility of giving motion and effect to the new system, among discordant elements, it was the lot of Washington to be called.

Was it right or wrong to provide for the payment of the public debt, justly called "*the price of liberty?*" Who can answer in the negative? Not to have done what was done, would have been injustice, for which there could have been no palliation.

Was Washington's administration right or wrong toward France and England, during their vindictive and exterminating war? Surely, the true policy of this country was *strict neutrality*. To preserve this, the most forbearing and conciliatory measures were adopted toward each; ministers were sent, and instructions given, to show that the United States were, and meant to be, *neutral*. To the last hour of his administration,

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* Pitkin.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

Washington persisted in his neutrality, and was able to countervail the popular clamor in favor of France.

In the discretionary exercise of executive power, the Washington administration was wise and talented. In filling offices, the president preferred, when he could, the revolutionary chiefs, of whose integrity and ability he had ample proofs. No one will say that such men did not deserve the honors and emoluments of office, which their own perilous efforts helped to establish. He displaced no man for the expression of his opinion, even in the feverish excitement of French delusion.

With regard to all other foreign governments; the judiciary; the national bank; the Indian tribes; the mint; in his deportment to his own ministers; his communications to Congress; his construction of the constitution; his sacred regard for it; his devotion to the whole Union; his magnanimity and forbearance; his personal dignity; in all these, and in relation to all other subjects, how great and honorable was his example![*]

[*] Sullivan

FAREWELL ADDRESS.

SEPTEMBER 17 1796.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens :—

THE period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprize you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom the choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea. I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove of my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed toward the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that, if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is to terminate the career of my political life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me, and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead—amid appearances sometimes dubious—vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging—in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism—the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts and a guaranty of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave as a strong incitement to unceasing wishes that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution which is the work of your hands may be sacredly maintained—that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption, of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare which can not end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of our hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth—as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed—it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and to speak of it as a palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and success.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here, every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The *north*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *south*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *south*, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the same agency of the *north*, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *north*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The *east*, in like intercourse with the *west*, in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The *west* derives from the *east* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort; and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of the indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest, as one nation. Any other tenure by which the *west* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connexion with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined can not fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations, and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue of the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations—*northern* and *southern*, *Atlantic* and *western*; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is, to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You can not shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen in the negotiation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic states unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties—that with Great Britain and that with Spain—which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, toward confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of your own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political system is, the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberations and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction; to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterward the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Toward the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you steadily discountenance irregular opposition to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretext. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what can not be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitutions of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially, that from the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them upon geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed;

but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later, the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of the public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight, the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foments occasional riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passion. Thus the policy and will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From the natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose; and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding, in the exercise of the powers of one department, to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominate in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions of the other, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern—some of them in our country, and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way in which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this in one instance may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed

The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexion with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric? Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering, also, that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives; but it is necessary that public opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential you should practically bear in mind that toward the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects, which is always a choice of difficulties, ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages that might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! it is rendered impossible by its vices.

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in the place of them, just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

Hence, frequent collisions and obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject. At other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to the projects of hostility, instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and the wars of the latter without adequate inducements or justification. It leads, also, to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which are apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupt, or deluded citizens, who devote themselves to the favorite nation, facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation to a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak nation toward a great and powerful one, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter. Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial, else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike for another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connexion as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence, she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war as our interests, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand on foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world, so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony and a liberal intercourse with all nations are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the stream of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed (in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, to enable the government to support them) conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and natural opinion will permit, but temporary and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another—that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character—that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not having given more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish—that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good—that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism—this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and the other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity toward other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and constancy which it is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortune.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence, and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love toward it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectations that retreat in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

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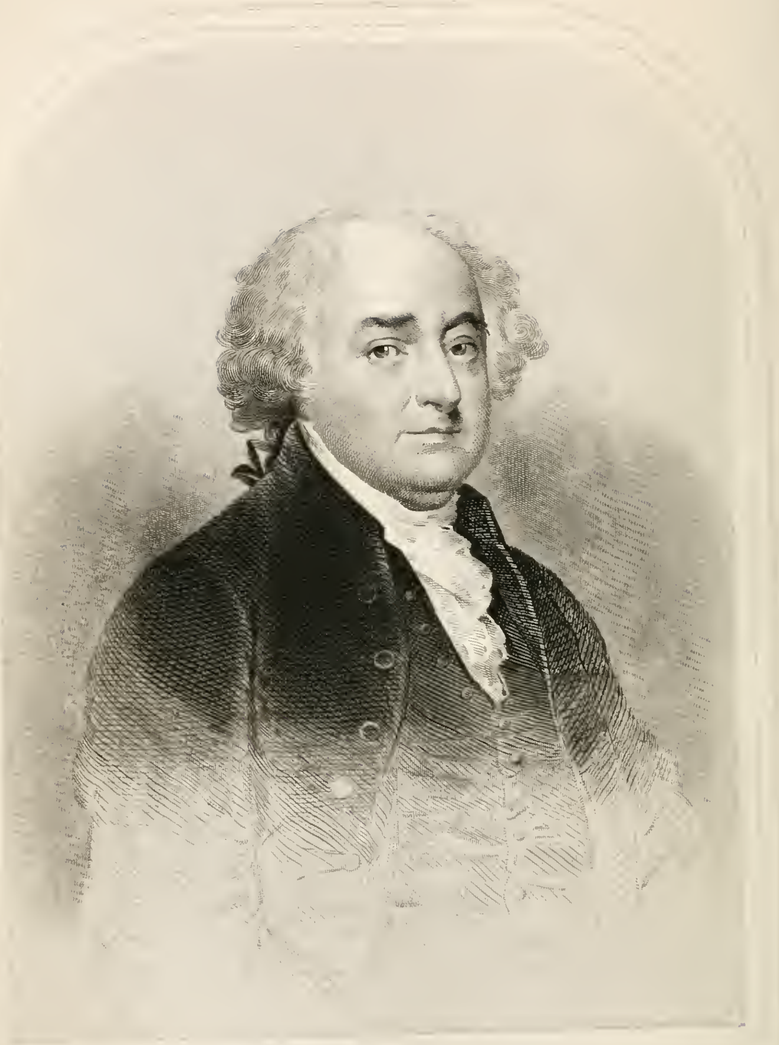

John Adams

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JOHN ADAMS.

John Adams, the second president of the United States, was born on the 19th of October (old style), 1735, in that part of the town of Braintree, in Massachusetts (near Boston) which has since been incorporated by the name of Quincy. He was the fourth in descent from Henry Adams, who fled from persecution in Devonshire, England, and settled in Massachusetts, about the year 1630. Another of the ancestors of Mr. Adams was John Alden, one of the pilgrim founders of the Plymouth colony in 1620. Receiving his early education in his native town, John Adams, in 1751, was admitted a member of Harvard college, at Cambridge, where he graduated in regular course, four years afterward. On leaving college he went to Worcester, for the purpose of studying law, and at the same time to support himself, according to the usage at that time in New England, by teaching in the grammar-school of that town. He studied law with James Putnam, a barrister of eminence, by whom he was afterward introduced to the acquaintance of Jeremy Gridley, then attorney-general of the province, who proposed him to the court for admission to the bar of Suffolk county, in 1758, and gave him access to his library, which was then one of the best in America.

Mr. Adams commenced the practice of his profession in his native town, and, by travelling the circuits with the court, became well known in that part of the country. In 1766, by the advice of Mr. Gridley, he removed to Boston, where he soon distinguished himself at the bar, by his superior talents as counsel and advocate. At an earlier period of his life, his thoughts had begun to turn on general politics, and the prospects of his country engaged his attention. Soon after leaving college, he wrote a letter to a friend, dated at Worcester, the 12th of October, 1755, which evinces so remarkable a foresight that it is fortunate it has been preserved. We make the following extracts: " Soon after the reformation, a few people came over into this new world, for conscience' sake.

Perhaps this apparently trivial incident may transfer the great seat of empire into America. It looks likely to me, if we can remove the turbulent Gallics, our people, according to the exactest computation, will, in another century, become more numerous than England herself. The only way to keep us from setting up for ourselves, is to disunite us. *Divide et impera.* Keep us in distinct colonies, and then some great men in each colony, desiring the monarchy of the whole, will destroy each other's influence, and keep the country in equilibrio. Be not surprised that I am turned politician; the whole town is immersed in politics. I sit and hear, and, after being led through a maze of sage observations, I sometimes retire and, by laying things together, form some reflections pleasing to myself. The produce of one of these reveries you have read above." Mr. Webster observes: "It is remarkable that the author of this prognostication should live to see fulfilled to the letter what could have seemed to others, at the time, but the extravagance of youthful fancy. His earliest political feelings were thus strongly American, and from this ardent attachment to his native soil he never departed."

In 1764, he married Abigail Smith, daughter of Rev. William Smith, of Weymouth, and grand-daughter of Colonel Quincy, a lady of uncommon endowments and excellent education. He had previously imbibed a prejudice against the prevailing religious opinions of New England, and became attached to speculations hostile to those opinions. Nor were his views afterward changed. In his religious sentiments he accorded with Doctor Bancroft, a unitarian minister of Worcester, of whose printed sermons he expressed his high approbation. In 1765, Mr. Adams published an essay on canon and feudal law, the object of which was to show the conspiracy between church and state for the purpose of oppressing the people.

In 1770, he was chosen a representative, from the town of Boston, in the legislature of Massachusetts. The same year he was one of the counsel who defended Captain Preston, and the British soldiers who fired at his order, upon the inhabitants of Boston. Captain Preston was acquitted, and Mr. Adams lost no favor with his fellow-citizens by engaging in this trial. As a member of the legislature, he opposed the royal governor, Hutchinson, in his measures, and also wrote against the British government in the newspapers. In 1774, he was elected a member of the Massachusetts council, and negatived by Governor Gage. In this and the next year, he wrote on the whig side the numbers called "Nov Anglus," in reply to essays, signed "Massachusitensis," in favor of the British government, by Sewall, the attorney-general. The same year he was appointed a member of the continental congress, from Massachusetts, and in that body, which met at Philadelphia, he became one of the most efficient and able advocates of liberty. In the Congress which met in May, 1775, he again took his seat, having been reappointed as a delegate. In 1775 he seconded the nomination of Washington as commander-in-chief of the army, and in July, 1776, he was the adviser and great supporter of the declaration of independence. It was reported by a committee composed of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston. During the same year, he, with Doctor Franklin and Edward Rutledge, was deputed to treat with Lord Howe for the pacification of the colonies. He declined, at this time, the offer of the office of chief justice of the supreme court of Massachusetts.

In December, 1777, Mr. Adams was appointed a commissioner to the court of France, in place of Silas Deane, who was recalled. He embarked in the frigate Boston, in February, 1778. On his arrival in France he found a treaty of amity and commerce, also a treaty of alliance, had been already signed, and, after Doctor Franklin received from Congress the appointment of minister plenipotentiary, Mr. Adams returned to the United States, in the summer of 1779.

Immediately after his return he was chosen a member of the Massachusetts convention for framing the new state constitution. He accepted a seat in that body, and his plan for a constitution being reported by a committee of which he was a member, was, in most of its important features, adopted by the convention.

During the time when he was attending to the business of the Massachusetts convention, Congress resolved to appoint a minister plenipotentiary for negotiating a treaty of peace with Great Britain. On the 29th of September, 1779, Mr. Adams received this appointment, and sailed in the French frigate La Sensible, in November. He landed at Ferrol, in Spain, and arrived in Paris in February, 1780. In August he repaired to Amsterdam, having previously been instructed to procure loans in Holland, and, soon afterward receiving power to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce. In 1782 he effected a loan for eight millions of guilders, also negotiated a very favorable treaty with Holland, which nation recognised the United States as free, sovereign, and independent.

In 1781 Mr. Adams was associated by Congress with Franklin, Jay, Laurens, and Jefferson, in a commission for concluding treaties of peace with the several European powers; and in 1783 he was associated with Franklin and Jay for the purpose of negotiating a commercial treaty with Great Britain. The definitive treaty of peace with Great Britain was signed on the 3d of September, 1783, by Messrs. Adams, Franklin, and Jay; the provisional treaty had been signed by the same commissioners, with Mr. Laurens, on the 30th of November, 1782.

During part of the year 1784, Mr. Adams remained in Holland, and returned to France, where he joined his associates appointed by Congress to negotiate commercial treaties with foreign nations. An extensive plan of operations for commercial conventions was formed, but not carried out.

In January, 1785, Congress appointed Mr. Adams minister to represent the United States at the court of Great Britain, an office at that time deemed peculiarly delicate and interesting. Although his reception by the king was favorable and courteous, Mr. Adams found the British ministry cold and unfriendly toward the United States, and he was, therefore, unable to negotiate a commercial treaty with that nation. In other respects, however, he rendered valuable services to his country, and, besides assisting in forming treaties with Prussia and Morocco, he wrote, while in Europe, an elaborate and eloquent defence of the forms of government established in the United States, in reply to strictures advanced by Mr. Turgot, the Abbé de Mably, Dr. Price, and other European writers. Immediately after the publication of this work, Mr. Adams asked permission to resign and return, and in June, 1788, he arrived in his native land, after an absence of between eight and nine years.

The services of Mr. Adams in the cause of his country, at home and abroad, during the period to which we have referred, it is believed, were not excelled by those of any other of the patriots of the revolution. In the language of one of his eulogists (Mr. J. E. Sprague, of Massachusetts): "Not a hundred men in the country could have been acquainted with any part of the labors of Mr. Adams—they appeared anonymously, or under assumed titles; they were concealed in the secret conclaves of Congress, or the more secret cabinets of princes. Such services are never known to the public; or, if known, only in history, when the actors of the day have passed from the stage, and the motives for longer concealment cease to exist. As we ascend the mount of history, and rise above the vapors of party prejudice, we shall all acknowledge that we owe our independence more to John Adams than to any other created being, and that he was the GREAT LEADER of the American Revolution."

When permission was given him to return from Europe, the continental Congress adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, that Congress entertain a high sense of the services which Mr. Adams has rendered to the United States, in the execution of the various important trusts which they have from time to time committed to him; and that the thanks of Congress be presented to him for the patriotism, perseverance, integrity, and diligence, with which he has ably and faithfully served his country." Such was the testimonial of his country, expressed through the national councils, at the termination of his revolutionary and diplomatic career.

During the absence of Mr. Adams in Europe, the constitution of the United States had been formed and adopted. He highly approved of its provisions, and on his return, when it was about to go into operation, he was selected by the friends of the constitution to be placed on the ticket with Washington as a candidate for one of the two highest offices in the gift of the people. He was consequently elected vice-president, and on the assembling of the senate, he took his seat as president of that body, at New York, in April, 1789. Having been re-elected to that office in 1792, he held it, and presided in the senate, with great dignity, during the entire period of Washington's administration, whose confidence he enjoyed, and by whom he was consulted on important questions. In his valedictory address to the senate, he remarks: "It is a recollection of which nothing can ever deprive me, and it will be a source of comfort to me through the remainder of my life, that on the one hand, I have for eight years held the second situation under our constitution, in perfect and uninterrupted harmony with the first, without envy in the one, or jealousy in the other, so, on the other hand, I have never had the smallest misunderstanding with any member of the senate."

In 1790, Mr. Adams wrote his celebrated "Discourses on Davila;" they were anonymously published, at first, in the Gazette of the United States, of Philadelphia, in a series of numbers; they may be considered as a sequel to his "Defence of the American Constitutions." He was a decided friend and patron of literature and the arts, and while in Europe, having obtained much information on the subject of public institutions, he contributed largely to the advancement of establishments in his native state, for the encouragement of arts, sciences, and letters.

On the retirement of General Washington from the presidency of the United States, Mr. Adams was elected his successor, after a close and spirited contest with two rivals for that high office; Mr. Jefferson being supported by the democratic or republican party, while a portion of the federal party preferred Mr. Thomas Pinckney, of South Carolina, who was placed on the ticket with Mr. Adams. The result, as we have stated, in our notice of Washington's administration, was the election of Mr. Adams as president, and Mr. Jefferson as vice-president, and in March, 1797, they entered upon their duties in those offices.

On meeting the senate, as their presiding officer, Mr. Jefferson remarked, that the duties of the chief magistracy had been "justly confided to the eminent character who preceded him, whose talents and integrity," he added, "have been known and revered by me through a long term of years; have been the foundation of a cordial and uninterrupted friendship between us; and I devoutly pray that he may be long preserved for the government, the happiness, and prosperity of our country." The senate adopted an address taking leave of Mr. Adams, after he had presided over them for eight years, with the strongest expressions of respect and attachment.

The administration of Mr. Adams we shall have occasion to notice in another place. He came to the presidency in a stormy time. In the language of Colonel Knapp, "the French revolution had just reached its highest point of settled delirium, after some of the paroxysms of its fury had passed away. The people of the United States took sides, some approving, others deprecating, the course pursued by France. Mr. Adams wished to preserve a neutrality, but found this quite impossible. A navy was raised, with surprising promptitude, to prevent insolence, and to chastise aggression. It had the desired effect, and France was taught that the Americans were friends in peace, but were not fearful of war when it could not be averted. When the historian shall come to this page of our history, he will do justice to the sagacity, to the spirit, and to the integrity of Mr. Adams, and will find that he had more reasons, and good ones, for his conduct, than his friends or enemies ever gave him."

In his course of public policy, when war with France was expected, he was encouraged by addresses from all quarters, and by the approving voice of Washington. He, however, gave dissatisfaction to many of his own political party, in his final attempts to conciliate France, and in his removal of two members of his cabinet, toward the close of his administration. Under these circumstances, notwithstanding Mr. Adams was the candidate of the federal party for re-election as president, and received their faithful support, it is not strange that his opponents, with the advantage in their favor of the superior popularity of Mr. Jefferson, succeeded in defeating him. For this event, the correspondence of Mr. Adams shows that he was prepared, and he left the arduous duties of chief magistrate probably with less of disappointment than his enemies had expected.

Immediately after Mr. Jefferson had succeeded to the presidency, in 1801, Mr. Adams retired to his estate at Quincy, in Massachusetts, and passed the remainder of his days in literary and scientific leisure, though occasionally addressing various communications to the public. He gave his support generally to the administration of Mr. Jefferson, and the friendship between these distinguished men was revived by a correspondence, and continued for several years previous to their death. When the disputes with Great Britain eventuated in war, Mr. Adams avowed his approbation of that measure, and in 1815 he saw the second treaty of peace concluded with that nation, by a commission of which his son was at the head, as he had been himself in that commission which formed the treaty of 1783.

In 1816, the republican party in Massachusetts, which had once vehemently opposed him as president of the United States, paid him the compliment of placing his name at the head of their list of presidential electors. In 1820, he was chosen a member of the state convention to revise the constitution of Massachusetts, which body unanimously solicited him to act as their president. This he declined, on account of his age, but he was complimented by a vote of the convention acknowledging his great services, for a period of more than half a century, in the cause of his country and of mankind.

In 1818, he had lost, by her death, his amiable and faithful consort, who had for so many years shared his anxieties and fortunes. His only daughter, Mrs. Smith, died in 1813. These ladies were distinguished through life as among the most excellent and talented of American females. The heroic spirit of Mrs. Adams is shown in a striking light in a letter from her to a friend in London, dated in 1777; we give the following extract: "Heaven is our witness, that we do not rejoice in the effusion of blood; but having forced us to draw the sword, we are determined never to sheathe it slaves of Britain. Our cause is, I trust, the cause of truth and justice, and will finally prevail, though the combined force of earth and hell shall rise against them. To this cause I have sacrificed much of my own personal happiness, by giving up to the councils of America one of my nearest connexions, and living for more than three years in a state of widowhood."

The last years of the long life of Mr. Adams were peaceful and tranquil. His mansion was always the abode of elegant hospitality, and he was occasionally enlivened by visits from his distinguished son, who, in 1825, he had the singular felicity of seeing elevated to the office of president of the United States. At length, having lived to a good old age, he expired, surrounded by his affectionate relatives, on the fourth of July, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of that independence which he had done so much to achieve. A short time before his death, being asked to suggest a toast for the customary celebration, he replied, "I will give you—Independence for ever." It is known that Mr. Jefferson died on the same day—a most remarkable dispensation of Providence. A similar coincidence occurred five years afterward, in the death of President Monroe, July 4, 1831.

Mr. Adams was of middle stature, and full person, and when elected president, he was bald on the top of his head. His countenance beamed with intelligence, and moral as well as physical courage. His walk was firm and dignified, to a late period of his life. His manner was slow and deliberate, unless he was excited, and when this happened, he expressed himself with great energy. He was ever a man of purest morals, and is said to have been a firm believer in Christianity, not from habit and example, but from diligent investigation of its proofs.

To use the words of a political friend of his (Mr. Sullivan): "He had an uncompromising regard for his own opinion; and seemed to have supposed that his opinions could not be corrected by those of other men, nor bettered by any comparison. It is not improbable that Mr. Adams was impatient in finding how much the more easily understood services of military men were appreciated, than were the secluded, though no less important ones, of diplomatic agency and cabinet council. So made up, from natural propensities, and from the circumstances of his life, Mr. Adams came to the presidency at the time when more forbearance and discretion were required than he is supposed to have had. He seems to have been deficient in the rare excellence of attempting to see himself as others saw him; and he ventured to act as though everybody

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saw as he saw himself. He considered only what was right in his own view; and that was to be carried by main force, whatever were the obstacles."

But whatever may be the judgment of posterity as to his merits as a ruler, there can be no question on the subject of his general character—nor of his penetrating mind—his patriotism, and his devotion to what he considered the true interests of his country.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN ADAMS.

The inauguration of John Adams, as the second president of the United States, took place in Congress Hall, at Philadelphia, on the fourth of March, 1797, in the presence of a large concourse of people, among whom were General Washington, the vice-president elect, the heads of departments, many members of Congress, foreign ministers, and other distinguished persons. Mr. Adams, who was then in his 62d year, was dressed in a full suit of pearl-colored broadcloth ; with powdered hair. Before the oath of office was administered to the new president, by Chief-Justice Ellsworth, he delivered his inaugural address ; the sentiments and style of which produced a favorable impression upon the people.

The retirement of General Washington was a cause of sincere rejoicing among those of his countrymen who had opposed his administration. In France it was an event long desired and cordially welcomed. On the other hand, many of the political friends of Washington, in view of the situation of the country, considered the loss of his personal influence a public calamity. But, as his successor was known to entertain similar views of public policy, great hopes were felt for the success of the new administration.

Mr. Adams continued in office the same cabinet which had been left by President Washington, namely: Timothy Pickering, secretary of state; Oliver Wolcott, secretary of the treasury ; James M'Henry, secretary of war ; and Charles Lee, attorney-general ; these gentlemen being all of the federal party. The navy department was not established until 1798, when Benjamin Stoddert, of Maryland, was appointed secretary of the navy, George Cabot, of Massachusetts, having declined the office.

The affairs of the United States with France, received the early attention of President Adams. The American minister to that republic, Charles C. Pinckney, had been expelled from their territory by the French rulers, who also issued new orders for depredations upon American commerce, more unjust and injurious than their former decrees. The president thought the state of affairs demanded the immediate consideration of Congress, and he therefore called that body together on the fifteenth of May, 1797.

There was a decided federal majority in each branch of the national legislature. Jonathan Dayton, of New Jersey, was again elected speaker of the house of representatives; which body, as well as the senate, responded to the president's speech in terms of approval. Several members, who were generally found in the opposition, voted in favor of resolutions for supporting the honor of the country, in consequence of the insulting conduct of the French government.

The administration and a majority in Congress, were still desirous of maintaining a neutral position, and an act was passed, in June, 1797, to prevent American citizens from fitting out or employing privateers against nations at peace with the United States. The exportation of arms and ammunition was also prohibited, and the importation of the same encouraged by law. The president was authorized to call out the militia to the number of eighty thousand, and to accept of the services of volunteers. At the same time, Congress provided for a small naval force, but not sufficient to meet the views of the president.

To provide means for extra expenses, to be incurred for measures of national defence, duties were imposed on stamped paper, and parchment, used for business purposes; an additional duty was also laid on salt, while a drawback was allowed on salt provisions and pickled fish exported. The stamp act proved an unpopular measure. This special session of the fifth Congress was adjourned on the 10th of July, 1797.

The president having intimated to Congress that he should make a new attempt to conciliate France, appointed, with the advice and consent of the senate, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Elbridge Gerry, and John Marshall, special envoys to that republic, with very ample powers. These gentlemen met at Paris, in October, 1797, and promptly attempted to execute their commission. The scenes which followed were well calculated to excite the indignation of the Americans.

The French government employed unofficial individuals to confer with the envoys, those individuals using, instead of their names, which were then unknown, the letters X. Y. Z., and in this way the intercourse with the American ministers was carried on. Attempts were made to detach the envoys from each other, and to learn the separate views of each, by secret interviews. Two of the ministers, Messrs. Pinckney and Marshall, were soon satisfied that no treaty could be made with France which would be honorable to the United States, and they requested of President Adams leave to return. They were soon ordered by the French government to quit France, while Mr. Gerry was invited to remain, and did so; not returning to the United States until October following.

When the despatches from the envoys were made public in the United States, they excited very general indignation, particularly when it was known that the French negotiators had demanded money of the United States, as the price of peace. The people responded to the sentiment of Mr. Pinckney on the occasion, "Millions for defence, but not a cent for tribute." Mr. Gerry was severely censured for not having left France with his colleagues. There is no doubt that he meant well, and that he supposed his better standing with the French rulers would enable him to effect the purposes of his mission. After finding his mistake, he was compelled to withdraw, on receiving instructions from the president, without, of course, effecting anything.

The fifth Congress reassembled at Philadelphia, on the 13th of November, 1797, and continued in session until the 16th of July, 1798, a period of 247 days, or over eight months. Many important laws were passed—among which were those for the protection of navigation, for maintaining neutrality, for the defence of the seacoast, by the fortification of Boston, Newport, New York, Baltimore, Norfolk, Charleston, and Savannah; and for an additional land and naval force; also for a loan, which was negotiated at eight per cent. interest, and a direct tax on real estate, to meet the extra expenses of these measures of defence. There was an apprehension on the part of a majority in Congress, that the French government, elated by the success of their arms in Europe, might attempt an invasion of the United States. At this time French ships-of-war were depredating on American commerce, and decrees were issued by the French directory, subjecting to seizure all American vessels having on board British goods or products, or which had sailed from British ports. An act of Congress was passed, in June, 1798, to suspend the commercial intercourse between the United States and France and her possessions. Merchant ships were authorized, under certain restrictions, to be armed in their voyages either to the West Indies or to Europe. A regular and permanent army was ordered to be raised, and the president was authorized to organize twelve additional regiments of infantry, and one regiment each of cavalry, artillery, and engineers, to serve during the difficulties with France. The president was also vested with power to build, purchase, or hire, twelve vessels, of twenty guns each, as an increase of the infant navy of the United States.* Although these measures for defence were generally warmly opposed by the democratic minority in Congress, and some of them adopted by small majorities, they were received with approbation by a great majority of the people. The young men took up the subject of the affairs of the country with great zeal, and in Boston, Robert Treat Paine wrote the celebrated song of "Adams and Liberty." He and others delivered patriotic orations to their young associates. Addresses were sent to the president from all parts of the country, glowing with patriotism, and with defiance of France. Mr. Adams had good reason to think that he stood strong in the respect and affections of the people, and at this period his administration was undoubtedly popular.

* At this session provision was made by law for the establishment of a navy department.

In the arrangement of the intended military force, all eyes were turned to Washington as the chief. Mr. Adams made known his intention to appoint him ; and in answer, without intimating a willingness to accept, he expressed his full approbation of the president's measures. He was afterward appointed, with the condition that he might select his officers next in command.*

The crisis did not arrive which rendered it necessary for Washington to take the field, and, in the course of the following year, a treaty was made with France, which put an end to the military operations in the United States. An army, however, was raised, in 1798, as voted by Congress, and General Hamilton, of New York, was the immediate and active commander, being next in rank to Washington, when the officers were appointed, and who was recommended by him for that station.†

Although there was no declaration of war, either on the part of France or the United States, hostilities actually commenced on the ocean between the two nations. The United States frigate Constellation, of 38 guns, Commodore Truxton, on the 9th of February, 1799, fell in with and captured the French frigate l'Insurgent, of 40 guns. This action took place in the West India seas, and lasted about an hour. The Constellation, after refitting in the United States, met at sea, February 1, 1800, the French frigate l'Vengeance, of 54 guns, which latter vessel was silenced after an action of five hours. A squall enabled her to escape, with the loss of 160 men killed and wounded.

The French government and people were surprised by the hostile movements of the United States. They seem to have relied on the opposition party in the United States to prevent war, which was not the object of France, and there soon appeared a disposition on the part of the French rulers to recede, with regard to their course toward the United States.

There were two acts of Congress passed in the summer of 1798, which became extremely unpopular with a large portion of the people. These were the alien and sedition laws. The alien law was objected to as extremely liable to abuse by the president, who was empowered to order aliens who were found or supposed to be conspiring against the peace and authority of the United States, to depart from its territories. One apology for the law was, that there were then computed to be thirty thousand Frenchmen in the United States, all of whom were devoted to their native country, and mostly associated, through clubs or otherwise. Besides these, there were computed to be fifty thousand who had been subjects of Great Britain, some of whom had found it unsafe to remain at home. It was also contended that the persons who, by the law, were liable to be required to leave the country, were not citizens—had no just claims to a continuance here—and that their residence, with the views they had, and the opinions they published, endangered the welfare of the nation, for which it was the imperious duty of Congress to provide. The objection to the sedition law was, that it restricted the liberty of speech and of the press, which was an arbitrary interference with the right of the citizens to express freely their opinions on all public and political measures. Those who justified the law asserted that the grossest falsehoods were uttered and published, tending to deceive the people, and to excite their prejudices unduly, to the danger of the peace of the nation: And the government ought to take measures to protect its rightful authority, and maintain the peace of the republic—that the law expressly provided, in mitigation of the common law on libels, that the truth, if proved, should be a justification.* [There were at this period two hundred newspapers published in the United States; 178 or 180 were in favor of the federal administration, about twenty were opposed to most of the leading measures then adopted, and the greater portion of these were under the control of aliens.]†

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* Sullivan.

† Bradford.

The opposition to the alien and sedition laws was very great in some parts of the country. In Virginia and Kentucky the legislatures declared them to be direct and gross infractions of the constitution, and appealed to the other states to join in opposition to them. At the next session of Congress, numerous petitions were presented for a repeal, but without avail at that time.‡

When the president met the fifth Congress at the commencement of their third session, in December, 1798, General Washington was present in the representatives' hall, accompanied by Generals Pinckney and Hamilton. This was Washington's last visit to Philadelphia, previous to his death, which took place a year afterward. He was now at the seat of government for the purpose of consulting with the president in arrangements respecting the organization of a provisional army.

The replies of both branches of Congress to the president's speech were in terms of decided approval of the measures recommended by him, particularly with regard to the course pursued toward France. Acts were passed for completing the organization of the army, and for augmenting the navy. The navy now began to be regarded with favor, and the president was authorized to contract for building six ships-of-war, of seventy-four guns; and six sloops-of-war, of eighteen guns each; for which purpose one million of dollars was appropriated.

Acts were also passed, for the relief and protection of American seamen, and authorizing the president to retaliate on subjects of other nations in cases of impressment; to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes; and farther to suspend the commercial intercourse between the United States and France. Sundry other measures of importance were adopted to provide for the exigencies of the country. The term of the fifth Congress expired March 3, 1799.

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* See Bradford's History of the Federal Government, and Sullivan's Letters.

† Bradford.

‡ Ibid.

Resistance to the laws for collecting a direct tax being made in the state of Pennsylvania, the governor of that state was called on by the president to order out the militia, which was done, and the insurrection was promptly suppressed.

Before the adjournment of Congress, Mr. Adams had received intimations from the French government, through the American minister in Holland, Mr. William Vans Murray, that one or more envoys would be received for the purpose of holding diplomatic intercourse. The president, therefore, concluded to make a new attempt at negotiation, and on the 26th of February, 1799, he nominated to the senate Mr. Murray, Oliver Ellsworth (then chief justice), and Patrick Henry, as envoys to France, who were confirmed by the senate. Mr. Henry declined, and Governor William R. Davie, of North Carolina, was substituted. In his letter declining the appointment, Patrick Henry said: "I entertain a high sense of the honor done me by the president and the senate. Nothing short of absolute necessity could induce me to withhold my feeble aid from an administration whose *abilities*, *patriotism*, and *virtue*, deserve the gratitude and reverence of all their fellow-citizens."

The president did not consult his cabinet on this occasion. When Mr. Pickering, secretary of state, and Mr. M'Henry, secretary of war, were informed that he intended a new mission, they remonstrated, and this made the breach, which had long been widening, irreparable. All those who had so far supported Mr. Adams's measures, considered it inconsistent with the honor and dignity of the nation to make any such attempt; and that proposals to treat should come directly from France. General Hamilton, Gouverneur Morris, and other prominent supporters of the administration, were much opposed to the course adopted by the president on this occasion.

The envoys to France delayed their departure till November, 1799, direct assurances not having been given to the president until October, that they would be favorably received by the French government. Hostilities between the two nations existed on the ocean, as already stated, without declaration of war, and upward of 300 private American vessels had been armed for self-defence. Depredations on American commerce had been committed for a long time by French cruisers, and an immense amount of property taken and destroyed.

When the American ministers reached Paris, a change in the French government had taken place. Napoleon Bonaparte was then first consul, and immediately appointed three commissioners, of whom his brother Joseph was one, to treat with those from the United States. Articles were ratified by the French government in October, 1800, and afterward conditionally confirmed by the president and senate, before the close of Mr.

Adams's administration. The senate suspended two articles of the treaty, for further negotiation, which were settled after Mr. Jefferson's accession to the presidency. The treaty was objected to in this country, that it did not definitely and expressly stipulate indemnification for recent depredations, by French vessels, on American commerce. The claims of the United States on France were not, indeed, abandoned, and the friends of the administration refrained from all denunciations and clamors against the treaty, from their confidence in the desire of the president and senate to sustain the honor and interest of the United States.

The elections for members of the sixth Congress had terminated favorably for the administration of Mr. Adams; and on the assembling of that body, in December, 1799, Theodore Sedgwick, of Massachusetts, a prominent federalist, was elected speaker. The answers of the two houses to the president's speech, expressed their entire approbation of the course of the president toward France, and their concurrence in his views on other subjects mentioned, particularly in persevering in a system of national defence, however the mission to France might terminate.

On the 18th of December, Congress received the afflicting intelligence of the death of General Washington, which was announced in the house of representatives by Mr. Marshall, of Virginia (afterward chief justice), and both houses immediately adjourned. The senate-chamber, and representatives' hall, were afterward dressed in mourning, and other demonstrations of respect and of the feelings of Congress, were adopted in memory of the father of his country.

At this session of Congress, which continued until the 14th of May, 1800, acts were passed further providing for the defence of the country and for the protection of commerce; for maintaining peace with the Indians; and for the relief of persons imprisoned for debt in cases decided by the courts of the United States. A bankrupt law was also enacted, having been proposed and advocated at several preceding sessions. An additional act was passed prohibiting the slave-trade, more explicit and extensive than the law of 1794. Additional duties were laid on sugar, molasses, and wines; and acts were also passed for taking a census in 1800, for erecting additional forts on the seacoast, for extending the postoffice establishment, and for the organization of Indiana territory. At this session, William H. Harrison appeared as the first delegate to Congress from the Northwest territory (now Ohio and Indiana).

The conciliatory measures of the president toward France did not have the effect of lessening the opposition to his administration; on the contrary, the democratic party continually gained strength and new adherents, and the violence of their censures and attacks upon the prominent measures of the federal government, increased as the dangers of war with France passed away. The public expenditures for the support of the army and navy, the direct taxes, and excise, but above all, the alien and sedition laws, were the subjects of constant attack, and successful efforts were made to render these measures unpopular with the people.

The two parties in Congress selected, in caucus, their candidates for president and vice-president, for the support of the people; the federalists presented the names of President Adams and General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, brother to Thomas Pinckney, who was placed on the ticket with Mr. Adams in 1796; the democrats, or republicans, nominated Mr. Jefferson and Colonel Aaron Burr. As most of the presidential electors were to be chosen by the legislatures of the several states, the contest commenced in the election of members of the state legislatures. The most important, as well as one of the earliest of these elections, was that in the state of New York, which took place on the last two days of April and the first of May, 1800. The result of that contest, which was known before Congress adjourned, was favorable to the friends of Jefferson and Burr, thus reversing the vote of New York, which had been given to Adams and Pinckney in 1796. The hopes of the democrats were, of course, raised in a high degree, and that of the federalists proportionably depressed, by the prospects before them which this election presented. The question of the presidency was not, however, by any means, considered as settled, and the public mind was destined to be deeply excited on the subject during the remainder of the year.

Immediately after the New York election, President Adams abruptly dismissed two of his cabinet ministers, viz., Mr. Pickering, secretary of state, and Mr. M'Henry, secretary of war, an event which caused much sensation, and probably had some influence in reducing the federalists to a minority. General Hamilton subsequently came out with a letter censuring the public conduct and character of Mr. Adams; which letter, disclosing a determined aversion to the president by so conspicuous a leader of the administration party, was considered as among the operative causes of Mr. Adams's failure at the ensuing election. Hamilton, it is supposed, intended the pamphlet only for circulation at the south; but, as it got into the hands of his opponents, its publication at New York was deemed indispensable. The object of the author of the letter appears to have been to secure the election of General Pinckney for president, but at the same time, he did not advise the withholding any of the votes of the federal electors from Mr. Adams. It was believed, by some, that the state of South Carolina would vote for Jefferson and Pinckney, as was the case in 1796, but in the month of December, 1800, when it was known that South Carolina had given her electoral votes for Jefferson and Burr, the defeat of the federal candidates was settled. The votes of the electoral colleges were as follows: Jefferson, 73; Burr, 73; Adams, 65; Pinckney, 64; John Jay, 1. The votes for Jefferson and Burr being equal, it remained for the house of representatives to decide, according to the constitution, as it then stood, which should be president, and which vice-president. Thus a new turn was given to the excitement in the public mind.

During the summer of 1800, the seat of government had been removed from Philadelphia to the new federal city of Washington, and at the lately-erected capitol President Adams met the sixth Congress, on the 22d of November, 1800, when he delivered his last annual speech to the national legislature. He had, in May previous, appointed John Marshall, of Virginia, secretary of state, and Samuel Dexter, of Massachusetts, secretary of war. On the 31st of December following, Oliver Wolcott resigned, as secretary of the treasury, and Mr. Dexter was appointed in his place. Roger Griswold, of Connecticut, was appointed secretary of war on the 3d of February. 1801.

The most important acts of Congress, from November, 1800, to March 3, 1801, were the following: An additional law relating to the federal judiciary, which divided the United States into six circuits, and provided for the appointment of three judges in each, leaving the judges of the supreme court to exercise power as a court of appeals, and for the correction of errors. An act for a naval peace establishment, by which the president was empowered, when he should think it safe and proper, to sell the ships of the United States, except thirteen of the largest frigates; that six of these be hauled up and dismantled, and the others retained in service. An act for continuing the mint at Philadelphia, and for directing the mode of estimating foreign coins; for extending routes for conveying the public mails; and for erecting several new lighthouses on the seacoasts.

The subject of erecting a mausoleum or monument to the memory of Washington, was frequently discussed in Congress during this session. It was voted, by the house of representatives, to erect a mausoleum, and one hundred thousand dollars were appropriated for the purpose; but the senate rejected the plan, and decided in favor of a monument, as it would be less expensive, and voted only fifty thousand dollars to complete it.*

Between the 13th of February and the 4th of March, 1801, President Adams appointed, with the consent of the senate, all the judges for the new courts, and the commissions were issued. The individuals selected for these offices were men of high standing, but the law was condemned by the democratic party, and the judges were called "the midnight judges of John Adams," in allusion to the supposed time of appointment, at the close of his official duties. In consequence of the repeal of the law under which they were appointed, these judges lost their offices, in the early part of Mr. Jefferson's administration.

On the 11th of February, 1801, the votes for president and vice-president were counted, in the senate-chamber, in the presence of both houses of Congress, when, the tellers having announced the result, the vice-president (Mr. Jefferson) declared, that Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr

* Bradford.

being equal in the number of votes, it remained for the house of representatives to determine the choice. Thereupon, the members of the house returned to their chamber, when it was ascertained that 104 members were present, one deceased, and one absent, from sickness. The first ballot, (being by states, according to the constitution) was eight states for Mr. Jefferson, six states for Mr. Burr, and two divided, which result continued to be the same after balloting thirty-five times. The number of those who voted for Burr was 53, all federalists, and 51 for Jefferson, all republicans, or democrats, with one or two exceptions. On the 36th ballot, which took place on the 17th of February, several of the members who had voted for Burr, withdrew their opposition to the election of Mr. Jefferson, by putting in blank votes, in consequence of which, there appeared for Jefferson ten states, for Burr four, viz., New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and there were two blanks, viz., Delaware and South Carolina. Mr. Jefferson was thereupon elected president, and Colonel Burr vice-president, for four years from the fourth of March, 1801.

The friends of the administration of Mr. Adams generally supported Colonel Burr, without any concert or understanding with him, but believing him to be more in favor of the policy before pursued, than Mr. Jefferson, particularly on the subject of commerce.

Of the character of Mr. Adams's administration, much difference of opinion still prevails; but viewing it in continuation of that of Washington, Mr. Bradford, in his history of the federal government, remarks :—

"By the prudent and pacific, yet firm and decided measures of the federal government, for twelve years, the character of the United States had become highly respectable among the greatest statesmen of Europe. Its policy exhibited a happy union of energy and magnanimity; and it was respected alike for its wisdom and power. The nation was placed in a commanding attitude of defence, while liberty, peace, and improvement, were everywhere witnessed within its jurisdiction. Public credit had been fully established; and able and faithful men had been selected for the public agents; men whose patriotism had been proved by eight years, service devoted to their country's welfare"

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

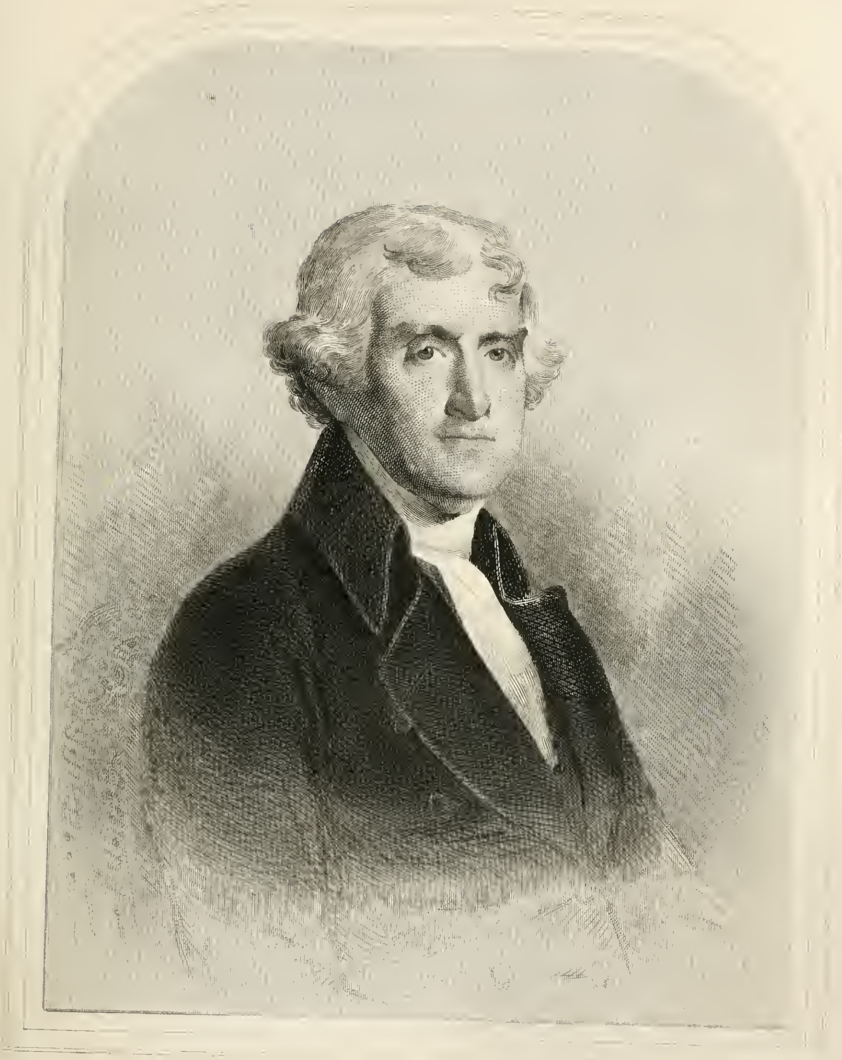
The life of Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, is one of the most interesting and instructive among those of the distinguished persons whose names are identified with American history. In the character of this extraordinary man, as well as in the events of his life, we are presented with a combination of philosophical attainments and political talents, of benevolent feelings, and ambitious aspirations, rarely found united in the same individual, and still more rarely resulting in the popular veneration bestowed upon his name by a large portion of his countrymen; while by others he has been regarded in an unfavorable light as a statesman and a ruler, particularly in the effect of his political principles upon the American people, over whom he acquired such an astonishing ascendency.

The family of Jefferson were among the early emigrants from Great Britain to Virginia. "The tradition in my father's family," the subject of this sketch says, in his own memoirs, "was, that their ancestor came to this country from Wales, and from near the mountain of Snowdon; but the first particular information I have of any ancestor, was of my grandfather, who lived at the place in Chesterfield called Osborne's, and owned the lands, afterward the glebe of the parish. He had three sons: Thomas, who died young; Field, who settled on the waters of the Roanoke, and left numerous descendants; and Peter, my father, who settled on the lands I still own, called Shadwell, adjoining my present residence. He was born February 29, 1707–'8, and intermarried, 1739, with Jane Randolph, of the age of 19, daughter of Isham Randolph, one of the seven sons of that name and family settled in Goochland. They traced their pedigree far back in England and Scotland, to which let every one ascribe the faith and merit he chooses."

At the above-named place, Shadwell, in Albemarle county, Virginia, Thomas Jefferson was born, on the 2d of April (old style), 1743. His father, Peter Jefferson, a man of some distinction in the colony, died in 1757, leaving a widow (who lived until 1776) with two sons and six daughters. These children inherited a handsome estate from their father: Thomas, the eldest, received the lands which he called Monticello, on which he resided, when not in public life and when he died.

At the age of five, his father placed him at an English school, and at nine years of age he commenced the study of Latin and Greek, with Mr. Douglass, a Scotch clergyman, who also instructed him in French. On the death of his father, he was placed under the tuition of another clergyman, Mr. Maury, a classical scholar, with whom he pursued his studies two years. In the spring of 1760, he entered William and Mary College, where he continued two years. Dr. William Small, of Scotland, was then professor of mathematics, and is described by Mr. Jefferson as "a man profound in most of the useful branches of science, with a happy talent of communication, correct and gentlemanly manners, and an enlarged and liberal mind. He, most happily for me," he adds, "became soon attached to me, and made me his daily companion when not engaged in the school; and from his conversation I got my first views of the expansion of science, and of the system of things in which we are placed. He returned to Europe in 1762, having previously filled up the measure of his goodness to me, by procuring for me, from his most intimate friend, George Wythe, a reception as a student at law under his direction, and introducing me to the acquaintance and familiar table of Governor Fauquier, the ablest man who had ever filled that office. Mr. Wythe continued to be my faithful and beloved mentor in youth, and my most affectionate friend through life. In 1767, he led me into the practice of the law, at the bar of the general court, at which I continued until the revolution shut up the courts of justice."

"It has been thought," says Mr. Wirt, "that Mr. Jefferson made no figure at the bar; but the case was far otherwise. There are still extant, in his own fair and neat hand, in the manner of his master, a number of arguments which were delivered by him at the bar, upon some of the most intricate questions of the law; which, if they shall ever see the light, will vindicate his claim to the first honors of his profession. It is true, he was not distinguished in popular debate; why he was not so, has often been matter of surprise to those who have not seen his eloquence on paper, and heard it in conversation. He had all the attributes of the mind, and the heart, and the soul, which are essential to eloquence of the highest order. The only defect was a physical one: he wanted volume and compass of voice for a large, deliberative assembly; and his voice, from the excess of his sensibility, instead of rising with his feelings and conceptions, sank under their pressure, and became guttural and inarticulate. The consciousness of this infirmity repressed any attempt in a large body in which he knew he must fail. But his voice was all-sufficient for the



Th: Jefferson

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purposes of judicial debate; and there is no reason to doubt that, if the service of his country had not called him away so soon from his profession, his fame as a lawyer would now have stood upon the same distinguished ground which he confessedly occupies as a statesman, an author, and a scholar.

"At the time of Mr. Jefferson's appearance," the same writer remarks, "the society of Virginia was much diversified, and reflected pretty distinctly an image of that of England. There was, first, the landed aristocracy, shadowing forth the order of English nobility; then the sturdy yeomanry, common to them both; and last, a *fœculum* of beings, as they were called by Mr. Jefferson, corresponding with the mass of the English plebeians.

"Mr. Jefferson, by birth, belonged to the aristocracy: but the idle and voluptuous life which marked that order had no charms for a mind like his. He relished better the strong, unsophisticated, and racy character of the yeomanry, and attached himself, of choice, to that body. He was a republican and a philanthropist, from the earliest dawn of his character. He read with a sort of poetic illusion, which identified him with every scene that his author spread before him. Enraptured with the brighter ages of republican Greece and Rome, he had followed with an aching heart the march of history which had told him of the desolation of those fairest portions of the earth; and had read, with dismay and indignation, of that swarm of monarchies, the progeny of the Scandinavian hive, under which genius and liberty were now everywhere crushed. He loved his own country with a passion not less intense, deep, and holy, than that of his great compatriot (John Adams): and with this love he combined an expanded philanthropy which encircled the globe. From the working of the strong energies within him, there arose an early vision, too, which cheered his youth and accompanied him through life—the vision of emancipated man throughout the world."*

While he was a student of law at Williamsburg, in 1765, Mr. Jefferson heard the celebrated speech of Patrick Henry, in the Virginia house of delegates, against the stamp-act; animated by the eloquence of Henry, he from that time stood forward as a champion for his country.

In 1769, he was chosen by the people of his county to represent them in the legislature of the colony, a station that he continued to fill up to the period of the revolution. In that capacity he made an effort, which was not successful, for the emancipation of slaves in Virginia.

In January, 1772, Mr. Jefferson married Mrs. Martha Skelton, a widow of twenty-three years of age, daughter of Mr. John Wayles, an eminent lawyer of Virginia, who left her a considerable fortune.

On the 12th of March, 1773, Mr. Jefferson was chosen a member of the first committee of correspondence established by the colonial legislatures. In 1774, he published his "Summary View of the Rights of British America," a powerful pamphlet, addressed to the king of Great Britain in which he set forth the true relations between the mother-country and colonies, as claimed by the people of this country. This pamphlet was republished in England, under the auspices of Edmund Burke.

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* Wirt's Eulogy on Adams and Jefferson.

In 1775, he was elected one of the delegates to represent Virginia in the continental Congress, of which body he was for several years one of the most active members. The Virginia delegates having, in pursuance of instructions from their provincial convention, moved a resolution in favor of the independence of the colonies, that question was taken up in Congress, and, after debate, referred to a committee of five, of whom Mr. Jefferson was chosen chairman. The committee, whose names are given in our biography of Mr. Adams, requested Mr. Jefferson to prepare the *Declaration of Independence.* To this he consented, although then one of the youngest members of Congress, and his draught of that paper, which is the principal monument of his fame, was accepted by the committee and by Congress, with few amendments, and finally adopted on the 4th of July, 1776.

The new state government of Virginia having been organized the same year, while Mr. Jefferson was in Congress, and he having been elected a member of the legislature, where he thought he could be useful in framing the laws required under a republican form of government, he resigned his place in Congress, and took his seat in the Virginia legislature, in October. In this station he acted as one of a commission for revising the laws of the commonwealth.

Among the laws proposed by him, and adopted, were those prohibiting the future importation of slaves; for abolishing the law of primogeniture, and providing for the equal partition of inheritances; for establishing religious freedom; and for a system of general education; which last measure was never carried into practice in the state.

The benevolence of Mr. Jefferson's character is shown in a transaction which took place in 1779. Congress had deemed it prudent to retain in this country the British troops who were captured at Saratoga on the surrender of Burgoyne, until the British government ratified the agreement of their commanding officer. These troops were removed into the interior of the county, and Charlottesville, in Virginia, in the immediate vicinity of Mr. Jefferson's residence, was selected for their residence. There they were sent in the early part of 1779, although the barracks were in an unfinished state, the provisions for their sustenance insufficient, and the roads in a bad condition. Mr. Jefferson and some of his neighbors did all in their power to alleviate the distresses of the troops, and the circumstances of their captivity. After arrangements were made for their accommodation, the governor and council, in consequence of the representations of persons who apprehended a scarcity of provisions, determined, as they were authorized to do by Congress, to remove the prisoners to another state, or to some other part of Virginia. This intention was heard by the officers and men with distress, and with regret by Mr. Jefferson and his neighbors. He therefore addressed a letter to Governor Henry, in which he stated, in earnest and feeling language, the inhumanity and impolicy of the proposed measure. This appeal was successful, and the troops were suffered to remain at Charlottesville. From the British officers Mr. Jefferson received many letters of thanks for his kindness and hospitality, which they did not forget in his subsequent visit to Europe. When the time arrived for their leaving Virginia to return to England, the officers united in a letter of renewed thanks and respectful farewell to him. In his reply Mr. Jefferson said: "The little attentions you are pleased to magnify so much, never deserved a mention or thought. Opposed as we happen to be, in our sentiments of duty and honor, and anxious for contrary events, I shall, nevertheless, sincerely rejoice in every circumstance of happiness and safety which may attend you personally."

On the first of June, 1779, Mr. Jefferson was elected by the legislature to succeed Patrick Henry, the first republican governor of Virginia. After holding the office two years, he retired to private life, and soon afterward he narrowly escaped capture by a company of 250 British cavalry, who were sent into the interior for the purpose of surprising and making prisoners the members of assembly at Charlottesville. No one was taken, and Mr. Jefferson, when pursued, escaped on his horse, through the woods at Carter's mountain. He was the same year elected a member of the legislature.

In 1781, Mr. Jefferson wrote his "Notes on Virginia," in reply to certain questions addressed to him by M. de Marbois, the secretary of legation from France in the United States, embracing a general view of its geography, natural productions, statistics, government, history, and laws. This little work, which has been very generally admired for its style and variety of information, was soon after published, both in French and English.

He had, in 1776, declined the appointment of commissioner, with Franklin and Deane, to negotiate treaties with France. In 1782, Congress appointed him a minister plenipotentiary, to join those who were in Europe, to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain, but intelligence having been received that preliminaries had been signed, Congress dispensed with his leaving the United States.

Having been again elected a delegate to Congress, in 1783, he was chairman of the committee to whom the treaty of peace with Great Britain was referred; and on the report of this committee the treaty was unanimously ratified. In 1784, he wrote notes on the establishment of a coinage for the United States, and proposed a different money unit from that suggested by Robert Morris, the continental financier, and of his assistant, Gouverneur Morris. To Mr. Jefferson we are indebted for the dollar as the unit, and our present system of coins and decimals.

As a member of Congress, Mr. Jefferson made but few speeches. He remarks: "I served with General Washington in the legislature of Virginia, before the revolution, and during it, with Dr. Franklin in Congress. I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point which was to decide the question."

He was appointed by Congress, in May, 1784, with Adams and Franklin, a minister plenipotentiary to negotiate treaties of commerce with foreign nations. In July he sailed from Boston for Europe, with his eldest daughter, and joined the other commissioners, at Paris, in August. Negotiations were only successful with Prussia and Morocco. In March, 1785, Mr. Jefferson was appointed by Congress to succeed Dr. Franklin as minister at the French court, and remained in France until October, 1789.

During his residence in Paris, his society was courted by Condorcet, D'Alembert, Morrellet, and other distinguished literary and scientific men of France; and in the gayety, learning, taste, elegance, and hospitality of Paris, he found the pleasures most congenial to his disposition. In the month of October, 1789, he obtained leave of absence for a short time, and returned to the United States. He arrived at Norfolk on the 23d of November, and on his way home received from President Washington a letter offering him the appointment of secretary of state, at the organization of the federal government under the constitution, which had then recently been adopted. His inclinations were to return to France, as minister, which was left at his option by the president, but he finally concluded to accede to the wishes of Washington that he should accept the seat in his cabinet offered to him. His reports, while secretary of state, on the currency, on weights and measures, on the fisheries, and on commercial restrictions, as well as his correspondence with foreign ministers, gave ample proofs of his ability as a statesman. In 1790, Mr. Jefferson accompanied President Washington on a visit to Rhode Island, after that state had accepted the federal constitution. In 1791, being called on by the president for his opinion on the act passed by Congress establishing a national bank, he made a written communication, objecting to the institution as unconstitutional. The bill was, however, approved by President Washington. On the 31st of December, 1793, Mr. Jefferson resigned his seat in the cabinet, and retired to private life, at Monticello. While holding office under Washington, he had disapproved of many of the measures of his administration, particularly in those which originated with the secretary of the treasury, Hamilton. Between that gentleman and Mr. Jefferson there were irreconcilable differences of opinion on political matters, which caused constant bickerings in the cabinet first formed by General Washington. The opposition to the federal administration assumed an organized form under the auspices of Mr. Jefferson. By his advice, the opposition party, which had been called *anti-federalists*, claimed the name of *republicans*, while their federal opponents called them *democrats*, after that name was introduced here from France. The term democrat was seldom used or countenanced by Mr. Jefferson.

In 1796, the political friends of Mr. Jefferson brought him forward as a candidate for president, but as Mr. Adams received the highest number of votes, that gentleman was elected president, and Mr. Jefferson vice-president, for four years from March 4, 1797. During that period, when not presiding in the senate, his time was passed in his favorite retreat at Monticello. He wrote a manual for the senate, which has ever since been the standard guide of Congress, as well as other political bodies, in the rules for transacting business.

In 1800, Mr. Jefferson was again nominated by his party, for president, and received a majority of votes over Mr. Adams. The votes for Mr. Jefferson and Colonel Burr, the republican candidates for president and vice-president, being equal, the house of representatives, as then required by the constitution, were called upon to decide which should be president. When the election came on in the house, the political opponents of Mr. Jefferson voted for Burr; but on the 36th ballot, the opposition being partially withdrawn, Mr. Jefferson was elected president, and Colonel Burr became, of course, vice-president.

Of the events of Mr. Jefferson's administration we shall speak in another place. He was re-elected president in 1804, and retired finally from public life March 4, 1809. The remaining seventeen years of his life were passed in the tranquillity of Monticello. "Here," says Mr. Webster, "he lived as became a wise man. Surrounded by affectionate friends, his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge undiminished, with uncommon health, and unbroken spirits, he was able to enjoy largely the rational pleasures of life, and to partake in that public prosperity which he had so much contributed to produce. His kindness and hospitality, the charm of his conversation, the ease of his manners, the extent of his acquirements, and especially the full store of revolutionary incidents which he possessed, and which he knew when and how to dispense, rendered his abode in a high degree attractive to his admiring countrymen, while his public and scientific character drew toward him every intelligent and educated traveller from abroad."

The correspondence of Mr. Jefferson was extensive through life. In his latter years he renewed his intimacy with Mr. Adams, and the letters between the two ex-presidents which were published, are of the most friendly character.

The principal object in which Mr. Jefferson took an interest in his declining years, was that of a system of education in Virginia, especially in the superintendence of the university of Virginia, which was founded in 1818, through his instrumentality. This institution was located at Charlottesville, at the foot of the mountain on which Monticello is situated, and Mr. Jefferson acted as rector from the time of its foundation until his death.

The pecuniary circumstances of Mr. Jefferson became embarrassed in his old age. He was compelled to dispose of his library, which was purchased by Congress for $23,950, and in 1825 he applied to the legislature of Virginia for leave to dispose of his estate at Monticello by lottery, to prevent its being sacrificed in payment of his debts. His request was granted, but his earthly career was closed before his wishes could be carried into effect. After a short illness, he died the following 4th of July, 1826, the aniversary of that day which fifty years before had been rendered memorable by that declaration of independence which had emanated from his pen. We have mentioned in another place the remarkable coincidence that his compatriot, John Adams, died on the same day.

In a private memorandum left by Mr. Jefferson, he desired that a small granite obelisk might be erected over his remains, with the following inscription:—

Here was buried
THOMAS JEFFERSON,
Author of the Declaration of Independence,
Of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom,
And Father of the University of Virginia.

The age of Mr. Jefferson at the time of his death, was a little over eighty-three years. His wife died in 1782, leaving three daughters, one of whom died young, one married John W. Eppes, and the other Thomas M. Randolph, both of Virginia, the latter afterward governor of the state. Mrs. Eppes died in 1804, while Mr. Jefferson was president; Mrs. Randolph survived him.

In person Mr. Jefferson was beyond the ordinary dimensions, being six feet two inches in height, thin, but well formed, erect in his carriage, and imposing in his appearance. His complexion was fair, his hair, originally red, became white and silvery in old age; his eyes were light blue, sparkling with intelligence, and beaming with philanthropy; his nose was large, his forehead broad, and his whole countenance indicated great sensibility and profound thought. His manners were simple and unpolished, yet dignified, and all who approached him were rendered perfectly at ease, both by his republican habits and his genuine politeness. His disposition being cheerful, his conversation was lively and enthusiastic, remarkable for the chastity of his colloquial diction and the correctness of his phraseology. He disliked form and parade, and his dress was remarkably plain, and often slovenly. Benevolence and liberality were prominent traits of his disposition. To his slaves he was an indulgent master. As a neighbor, he was much esteemed for his liberality and friendly offices. As a friend, he was ardent and unchangeable; and as a host, the munificence of his hospitality was carried to the excess of self-impoverishment. He possessed great fortitude of mind, and his command of temper was such that he was never seen in a passion.

As a man of letters, and a votary of science, he acquired high distinction. In the classics, and in several European languages, as well as in mathematics, he attained a proficiency not common to American students.

With regard to his political opinions, and his character as a statesman, his countrymen have widely differed in their estimates. By some persons he has been considered as one of the most pure, amiable, dignified, wise, and patriotic of men. By others he has been considered as remarkably defective in the qualities which dignify and adorn human life, and as one of the most wrong-headed statesmen that ever lived. Posterity will judge which of these opinions is right, and which is wrong. His writings which, agreeably to directions left by him, have been published since his death, afford ample materials for judging of his character. They consist of four volumes, octavo, of correspondence, *anas*, &c.

The religious opinions of Mr. Jefferson were peculiar and eccentric. His writings show that he was a free-thinker, with a preference for some of the doctrines of unitarianism. In a letter to a friend he says: "I have to thank you for your pamphlets on the subjects of unitarianism, and to express my gratification with your efforts for the revival of *primitive Christianity* in your quarter. And a strong proof of the solidity of the primitive faith is its restoration, as soon as a nation arises which vindicates to itself the freedom of religious opinion, and its external divorce from civil authority. I confidently expect that the present generation will see unitarianism become the general religion of the United States."

In a letter to William Short, dated April, 1820, when alluding to the subject of religion, Mr. Jefferson remarks: "But it is not to be understood that I am with him [Jesus] in all his doctrines. I am a materialist; he takes the side of spiritualism; he preaches the efficacy of repentance toward forgiveness of sin; I require a counterpoise of good works to redeem it, &c., &c. It is the innocence of his character, the purity and sublimity of his moral precepts, the eloquence of his inculcations, the beauty of the apologues in which he conveys them, that I so much admire; sometimes, indeed, needing indulgence to eastern hyperbolism. My eulogies, too, may be founded on a postulate which all may not be ready to grant. Among the sayings and discourses imputed to him by his biographers, I find many passages of fine imagination, correct morality, and of the most lovely benevolence; and others, again, of so much ignorance, so much absurdity, so much untruth, charlatanism, and imposture, as to pronounce it impossible that such contradictions should have proceeded from the same being. I separate, therefore, the gold from the dross; restore to him the former, and leave the latter to the stupidity of some, and roguery of others of his disciples. Of this band of dupes and impostors, Paul was the great Coryphæus, and first corrupter of the doctrines of Jesus. These palpable interpolations and falsification of his doctrines led me to try to sift them apart. I found the work obvious and easy, and that his part composed the most beautiful morsel of morality which has been given to us by man."

The following is an extract from the last letter of Mr. Jefferson, written only ten days previous to his death:—

"MONTICELLO, *June* 24, 1826.

"RESPECTED SIR: The kind invitation I received from you, on the part of the citizens of Washington, to be present with them at their celebration on the fiftieth anniversary of American independence, as one of the surviving signers of an instrument pregnant with our own, and the fate of the world, is most flattering to myself, and heightened by the honorable accompaniment proposed for the comfort of such a journey. It adds sensibly to the sufferings of sickness, to be deprived by it of a personal participation in the rejoicings of that day. But acquiescence is a duty, under circumstances not placed among those we are permitted to control. May that day be to the world, what I believe it will be (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all) the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government. For ourselves, let the annual return of this day for ever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them. "TH. JEFFERSON.

"To Mr. WEIGHTMAN."

ADMINISTRATION OF JEFFERSON.

On the day of his inauguration as president of the United States, March 4, 1801, Mr. Jefferson was in the 58th year of his age. He delivered his inaugural address in the new capitol at Washington, in presence of the vice-president, the senators, many members of the house of representatives, the foreign ministers, and a large concourse of citizens. The oath of office was administered by Chief-Justice Marshall, after the address was delivered. The vice-president, Colonel Burr, took his seat in the senate the same day. He had taken no part in the election of president by the house of representatives, having been in Albany during that contest. The democratic party in the house were pledged to persevere in voting for Mr. Jefferson to the end, whatever might be the consequence, and none of them varied from that pledge. Colonel Burr, on the 16th of December, 1800, addressed a letter to General S. Smith, of Baltimore, who was then a member of the house of representatives, in which he disclaimed all competition with Mr. Jefferson. "As to my friends," he says, "they would dishonor my views, and insult my feelings, by a suspicion that I would submit to be instrumental in counteracting the wishes and the expectations of the people of the United States. And I now constitute you my proxy to declare these sentiments, if the occasion should require." Notwithstanding this course of Colonel Burr, the contest in Congress produced, almost immediately after the election, strong feelings of dissatisfaction between some of the friends of the president and vice-president. Jealousies and distrust had previously existed between these different sections of the democratic party, now triumphant in the possession of the power of the federal government. These feelings were suppressed for a time, but circumstances subsequently occurred which renewed them, and the result was the political prostration of the vice-president, before his term of office had expired.

The senate having been called together by President Adams, Mr. Jefferson commenced the organization of his cabinet by the appointment, with the consent of the senate, on the 5th of March, of James Madison, secretary of state, Henry Dearborn, of Massachusetts, secretary of war, and Levi Lincoln, of Massachusetts, attorney-general. The secretaries of the treasury and navy, Samuel Dexter and Benjamin Stoddert, who had been appointed by Mr. Adams, were continued in office a short time; but before the meeting of Congress, Albert Gallatin, of Pennsylvania, was appointed secretary of the treasury, and Robert Smith, of Maryland, secretary of the navy. At the same time with the last, Gideon Granger, of Connecticut, was appointed postmaster-general, in place of Joseph Habersham, of Georgia. This officer was not made a member of the cabinet until the administration of President Jackson. The nominations of Gallatin, Smith, and Granger, were confirmed by the senate on the 26th of January, 1802.

In his inaugural speech, Mr. Jefferson soothed the serious apprehensions, which were entertained by his political opponents, as to the manner in which he might exercise executive power. From his declarations in that address, the federalists hoped that he would not disturb those of their party who were in office, or cause any radical change in the administration of the government. They were soon made to understand that political tolerance was not to be expected in all cases toward officeholders. In June, 1801, Mr. Jefferson removed Elizur Goodrich, a federalist, from the office of collector of the port of New Haven, and appointed Samuel Bishop, a democrat, in his place. In reply to a remonstrance from the merchants and other citizens of New Haven, in which they assert Mr. Goodrich's promptness, integrity, and ability; and better qualifications than those of Mr. Bishop, who was nearly seventy-eight years of age, and quite infirm, Mr. Jefferson said, among other things, in his answer, dated 12th of July: "Declarations by myself, in favor of political tolerance, exhortations to harmony and affection in social intercourse, and respect for the equal rights of the minority, have, on certain occasions, been quoted and misconstrued into assurances that the tenure of offices was not to be disturbed. But could candor apply such a construction? When it is considered that, during the late administration, those who were not of a particular sect of politics were excluded from all office; when, by a steady pursuit of this measure, nearly the whole offices of the United States were monopolized by that sect; when the public sentiment at length declared itself, and burst open the doors of honor and confidence to those whose opinions they approved; was it to be imagined that this monopoly of office was to be continued in the hands of the minority? Does it violate their *equal rights* to assert some rights in the majority also? Is it *political intolerance* to claim a proportionate share in the direction of the public affairs? If a due participation of office is a matter of right, how are vacancies to be obtained? Those by death are few, by resignation none. Can any other mode than that of removal be proposed? This is a painful office; but it is made my duty, and I meet it as such. I proceed in the operation with deliberation and inquiry, that it may injure the best men least, and effect the purposes of justice and public utility with the least private distress; that it may be thrown as much as possible on delinquency, on oppression, on intolerance, on anti-revolutionary adherence to our enemies.

"I lament sincerely that unessential differences of opinion should ever have been deemed sufficient to interdict half the society from the rights and the blessings of self-government, to proscribe them as unworthy of every trust. It would have been to me a circumstance of great relief, had I found a moderate participation of office in the hands of the majority. I would gladly have left to time and accident to raise them to their just share. But their total exclusion calls for prompter corrections. I shall correct the procedure; but that done, return with joy to that state of things when the only questions concerning a candidate shall be, Is he honest? as he capable? Is he faithful to the constitution?"

It should be borne in mind that most of the persons who were in office when Mr. Jefferson came into power, were those who had been appointed by General Washington, and continued in their places by Mr. Adams, who made very few removals, and none for party reasons. If there was anything sectarian, then, in the system of appointments to office, it was chargeable more to General Washington than to Mr. Adams. The democratic party, however, had scarcely a name or an existence when Washington's administration commenced; and when the first appointments were made under the general government, reference could not have been had to political distinctions. Those who received appointments from Washington were doubtless preferred for their integrity, capacity, and fidelity to the constitution.

But Mr. Jefferson had been elected by a party, and was under the necessity of rewarding his supporters with offices and incomes; and in his letter, quoted above, may be found the origin of the doctrine, "to the victors belong the spoils." But it is due to him to say, that although he confined his appointments to office to his political friends, as did generally his successors, Presidents Madison and Monroe, his removals of political opponents from office, during the eight years of his administration, were but few in number, compared with those of more recent administrations.

The implied invitation given by Mr. Jefferson to all political adversaries, to abandon their creeds and adopt his own, with the expectation and implied promises of reward for apostacy, induced many of the federalists to join the triumphant party of the administration, some of whom were appointed to office under the general government. To prove their sincerity, they resorted to the bitterest condemnation of their former principles and associates. Sustained by the salaries of office, and raised by titles above those they had deserted, they could clearly see how base, plotting, and traitorous, some of their fellow-citizens were, with whom, but yesterday, they were proud to rank, and most zealous to uphold, as worthy patriots. There were instances of departure from the federal side distinguishable from such as have been mentioned, and which did not deserve reproach.

There were timid men who did not entirely approve of federal views of the national policy; others, who thought themselves not to have been sufficiently valued by their federal associates; and some were by nature and inclination Jeffersonians, and who originally mistook their side, and very properly went over where they belonged.*

Mr. Jefferson said that he regarded all the appointments made by Mr. Adams after the 14th of February, while the house of representatives was balloting for president, as absolutely void. This must be understood to mean that, though Mr. Adams was constitutionally president up to the midnight hour of the 3d of March, yet he ought to have submitted his will to that of his successor. On the same principle, Mr. Jefferson withheld the commissions of certain magistrates whom Mr. Adams had appointed, in the District of Columbia. The commissions were made out, and ready for delivery, but Mr. Jefferson ordered them to be suppressed. One of these magistrates (Mr. Marbury) applied to the supreme court for a writ of mandamus to Mr. Madison, the new president's secretary of state, to deliver his commission. But, after an able investigation of constitutional law, the court did not grant the motion. Mr. Jefferson found a commission duly made out, and signed by Mr. Adams, appointing a gentleman district judge in Rhode Island. This commission he suppressed, and appointed one in whom he could confide.†

The following extracts from Mr. Jefferson's letters, written soon after his election, are interesting, as showing his views and feelings at that time, with regard to events, and on questions of public policy. To Governor M·Kean, March 9, 1801, he writes: "I thank you for congratulations on the event of the election. Had it terminated in the elevation of Mr. Burr, every republican would, I am sure, have acquiesced in a moment; because, however it might have been varient from the intentions of the voters, yet it would have been agreeable to the constitution. No man would more cheerfully have submitted than myself, because I am sure the administration would have been republican, and the chair of the senate permitting me to be at home eight months in the year, would, on that account, have been much more consonant to my real satisfaction. But in the event of a usurpation, I was decidedly with those who were determined not to permit it. Because that precedent, once set, would be artificially reproduced, and end soon in a dictator." An explanation of his meaning may be found in a previous letter to James Monroe, dated February 15, before the question of election of president by the house was decided: "Four days of balloting have produced not a single change of a vote. Yet it is confidently believed that to-morrow there is to be a coalition. I know of no foundation for this belief. If they could have been permitted to pass a law for putting the government into the hands of an officer, they would certainly have prevented an election. But we thought it best to declare openly and firmly, one and all, that the day such an act passed, the middle states would arm, and that no such usurpation, even for a single day, should be submitted to. This first shook them; and they were completely alarmed at the resource for which we declared, to wit, a convention to reorganize the government and to amend it. The very word *convention* gives them the horrors, as, in the present democratical spirit of America, they fear they should lose some of the favorite morsels of the constitution. Many attempts have been made to obtain terms and promises from me. I have declared to them unequivocally, that I would not receive the government on capitulation; that I would not go into it with my hands tied."

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* Sullivan.

† Ibid.

The following extracts from documents published by the sons of the Hon. James A. Bayard, of Delaware, in the National Gazette, of Philadelphia, in December, 1830, in vindication of their father, who was a member of Congress at the time of the presidential election of 1801, are deemed important to illustrate this portion of political history.*

Extracts of a letter from George Baer, Esq. (a member of the 6th Congress, from Maryland, in 1801), to Richard H. Bayard, Esq., dated Frederick, April 19, 1830.

"Previous to and pending the election, rumors were industriously circulated, and letters written to different parts of the country, charging the federalists with the design to prevent the election of a president, and to usurp the legislative power. I was privy to all the arrangements made, and attended all the meetings of the federal party when consulting on the course to be pursued in relation to the election, and I pledge my most solemn asseveration that no such measure was for a moment contemplated by that party; that no such proposition was ever made; and that if it had ever been, it would not only have been discouraged, but instantly put down, by those gentlemen who possessed the power, and were pledged to each other to elect a president before the close of the session."

"Although nearly thirty years have elapsed since that eventful period, my recollection is vivid, as to the principal circumstances, which, from the part I was called upon to act, were deeply graven on my memory. It was soon ascertained that there were six individuals, the vote of any one of whom could at any moment decide the election These were your father, the late James A. Bayard, who had the vote of the state of Delaware, General Morris, of Vermont, who held the divided vote of that state, and Mr. Craik, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Dennis, and myself, who held the divided vote of Maryland. Your father, Mr. Craik, and myself, having compared ideas upon the subject, and finding that we entertained the same views and opinions, resolved to act together, and accordingly entered into a solemn and mutual pledge, that we would, in the first instance, yield to the wishes of the great majority of the party with whom we acted, and vote for Mr. Burr, but that no consideration should induce us to protract the contest beyond a reasonable period for the purpose of ascertaining whether he could be elected. We determined that a president should be chosen, but were willing thus far to defer to the opinions of our political friends, whose preference of Mr. Burr was founded upon a belief that he was less hostile to federal men and federal measures, than Mr. Jefferson. General Morris and Mr. Dennis concurred in this arrangement."

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* See Davis's Life of Burr, and Appendix to Knapp's Life of Burr.

Extract from the deposition of Hon. James A. Bayard, taken and sworn to, at Washington, April 3, 1806:—

"Messrs. Baer and Craik, members of the house of representatives from Maryland, and General Morris, a member of the house from Vermont, and myself, having the power to determine the votes of the states, from similarity of views and opinions, during the pendency of the election, made an agreement to vote together. We foresaw that a crisis was approaching which might probably force us to separate in our votes from the party with whom we usually acted. We were determined to make a president, and the period of Mr. Adams's administration was rapidly approaching.

"In determining to recede from the opposition to Mr. Jefferson, it occurred to us, that, probably, instead of being obliged to surrender at discretion, we might obtain terms of capitulation. The gentlemen whose names I have mentioned, authorized me to declare their concurrence with me upon the best terms that could be procured. The vote of either of us was sufficient to decide the choice. With a view to the end mentioned, I applied to Mr. John Nicholas, a member of the house from Virginia, who was a particular friend of Mr. Jefferson. I stated to Mr. Nicholas, that if certain points of the future administration could be understood and arranged with Mr. Jefferson, I was authorized to say that three states would withdraw from an opposition to his election. He asked me what those points were: I answered, First, sir, the support of the public credit; secondly, the maintenance of the naval system; and lastly, that subordinate public officers employed only in the execution of details, established by law, shall not be removed from office on the ground of their political character, nor without complaint against their conduct. I explained myself that I considered it not only reasonable, but necessary, that offices of high discretion and confidence should be filled by men of Mr. Jefferson's choice. I exemplified, by mentioning, on the one hand, the offices of the secretaries of state, treasury, foreign ministers, &c.; and on the other, the collectors of ports, &c. Mr. Nicholas answered me, that he considered the points very reasonable, that he was satisfied that they corresponded with the views and intentions of Mr. Jefferson, and he knew him well. That he was acquainted with most of the gentlemen who would probably be about him and enjoy his confidence, in case he became president, and that if I would be satisfied with *his* assurance, he could solemnly declare it as his opinion, that Mr. Jefferson, in his administration, would not depart from the points I proposed. I replied to Mr. Nicholas, that I had not the least doubt of the sincerity of his declaration, and that his opinion was perfectly correct, but that I wanted an engagement, and that if the points could in any form be understood as conceded by Mr. Jefferson, the election should be ended: and proposed to him to consult Mr. Jefferson. This he declined, and said he could do no more than give me the assurance of his own opinion as to the sentiments and designs of Mr. Jefferson and his friends. I told him that was not sufficient, that we should not surrender without better terms. Upon this we separated; and I shortly after met with General Smith, to whom I unfolded myself in the same manner that I had done to Mr. Nicholas. In explaining myself to him in relation to the nature of the offices alluded to, I mentioned the offices of George Latimer, collector of the port of Philadelphia, and Allen M'Lane,* collector of Wilmington, General Smith gave me the same assurance, as to the observance by Mr. Jefferson of the points which I had stated, which Mr. Nicholas had done. I told him I should not be satisfied, nor agree to yield, till I had the assurance of Mr. Jefferson himself; but that if he would consult Mr. Jefferson, and bring the assurance from him, the election should be ended. The general made no difficulty in consulting Mr. Jefferson, and proposed giving me his answer the next morning. The next day, upon our meeting, General Smith informed me that he had seen Mr. Jefferson, and stated to him the points mentioned, and was authorized by him to say, that they corresponded with his views and intentions, and that we might confide in him accordingly. The opposition of Vermont, Maryland, and Delaware, was immediately withdrawn, and Mr. Jefferson was made president by the votes of ten states."

The deposition of Mr. Bayard is followed by that of Hon. Samuel Smith, of Maryland, taken 15th of April, 1806, which substantially confirms the above statement of Mr. Bayard.

We give a few further extracts from Mr. Jefferson's letters, to show his views and the progress of political events, after his accession to the presidency.

To John Dickinson, March 6, 1801, he writes: "The storm through which we have passed, has been tremendous indeed. The tough sides of our Argosie have been thoroughly tried. Her strength has stood the waves into which she was steered with a view to sink her. We shall put her on the republican track, and she will now show, by the beauty of her motion, the skill of her builders. Figure apart, our fellow-citizens have been led, hoodwinked, from their principles, by a most extraordinary combination of circumstances. But the band is removed, and they now see for themselves. I hope to see shortly a perfect consolidation, to effect which, nothing shall be wanting on my part, short of the abandonment of the principles of the revolution A just and solid republican government maintained here, will be a standing monument and example for the aim and imitation of the people of other countries."

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* According to Davis's Life of Burr, these gentlemen, Latimer and M'Lane, were retained in office.

To Colonel Monroe, March 7, he gives his views as to appointments to office, as follows: "To give time for a perfect consolidation seems prudent. I have firmly refused to follow the counsels of those who have desired the giving offices to some of their leaders [federalists], in order to reconcile. I have given, and will give, only to republicans, under existing circumstances. But I believe, with others, that deprivations of office, if made on grounds of political principles alone, would revolt our new converts, and give a body to leaders who now stand alone. Some, I know, must be made. They must be as few as possible, done gradually, and bottomed on some malversation or inherent disqualification. Where we shall draw the line between retaining all and none, is not yet settled, and will not be till we get our administration together; and perhaps even then we shall proceed *à tatons*, balancing our measures according to the impression we perceive them to make. This may give you a general view of our plan."

To Thomas Paine (then in France) he writes, March 18: "The return of our citizens from the phrensy into which they had been wrought, partly by ill conduct in France, partly by artifices practised on them, is almost entire, and will, I believe, become quite so. But these details will be better developed by Mr. Dawson, the bearer of this, a member of the late Congress, to whom I refer you for them. He goes in the Maryland, a sloop-of-war, which will wait a few days at Havre to receive his letters. You expressed a wish to get a passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland to receive and accommodate you with a passage back, if you can be ready at such short warning. Robert R. Livingston is appointed minister to the republic of France, but will not leave this till we receive the ratification of the convention by Mr. Dawson. I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored, and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labors, and to reap their reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer."

To William B. Giles, March 23: "I received, two days ago, your favor of the 16th, and thank you for your kind felicitations on my election: but whether it will be a subject of felicitation permanently, will be for chapters of future history to say. The important subjects of the government I meet with some degree of courage and confidence, because I do believe the talents to be associated with me, the honest line of conduct we will religiously pursue, at home and abroad, and the confidence of my fellow-citizens dawning on us, will be equal to these objects. But there is another branch of duty which I must meet with courage too, though I can not without pain; that is, the appointments and disappointments as to offices. Madison and Gallatin being still absent, we have not yet decided on our rules of conduct as to these. That some ought to be removed from office, and that all ought not, all mankind will agree. But where to draw the line, perhaps no two will agree. Consequently, nothing like a general approbation on this subject can be looked for. Some principles have been the subject of conversation, but not of determination; *e. g.*, all appointments to *civil* offices *during pleasure*, made after the event of the election was certainly known to Mr. Adams, are considered as nullities. I do not view the persons appointed as even candidates for the office, but make others without noticing or notifying them. Mr. Adams's best friends have agreed this is right. 2. Officers who have been guilty of *official* malconduct are subjects of removal. 3. Good men, to whom there is no objection but a difference of political principle, practised on only as far as the right of a private citizen will justify, are not proper subjects of removal, except in the cases of attorneys and marshals. The courts being so decidedly federal and irremovable, it is believed that republican attorneys and marshals, being the doors of entry into the courts, are indispensably necessary as a shield to the republican part of our fellow-citizens, which, I believe, is the main body of the people. These principles are yet to be considered of, and I sketch them to you in confidence."

To Elbridge Gerry, March 28: "Mr. Adams's last appointments, when he knew he was naming counsellors and aids for me, and not for himself, I set aside, as far depends on me. Officers who have been guilty of gross abuses of office, such as marshals packing juries, &c., I shall now remove, as my predecessor ought in justice to have done. The instances will be few, and governed by strict rule, and not party passion. The right of opinion shall suffer no invasion from me. Those who have acted well have nothing to fear, however they may have differed from me in opinion."

To Gideon Granger, May 3, 1801: "A new subject of congratulation has arisen. I mean the regeneration of Rhode Island. I hope it is the beginning of that resurrection of the genuine spirit of New England which rises for life eternal. According to natural order, Vermont will emerge next, because least, after Rhode Island, under the yoke of hierocracy. I have never dreamed that all opposition was to cease. The clergy, who have missed their union with the state, the Anglemen, who have missed their union with England, and the political adventurers, who have lost the chance of swindling and plunder in the waste of public money, will never cease to bawl on the breaking up of their sanctuary. But among the people the schism is healed, and with tender treatment the wound will not reopen. Their quondam leaders have been astounded with the suddenness of the desertion: and their silence and appearance of acquiescence have proceeded not from a thought of joining us, but the uncertainty what ground to take. The very first acts of the administration, the nominations, have accordingly furnished something to yelp on; and all our subsequent acts will furnish them fresh matter, because there is nothing against which human ingenuity will not be able to find something to say."

To Nathaniel Macon, May 14:—

"Now to answer your particulars, *seriatim*.

"Levees are done away with.

"The first communication to the next Congress will be, like all subsequent ones, by message, to which no answer will be expected.

"The diplomatic establishment in Europe will be reduced to three ministers.

"The compensation to collectors depends on you, and not on me.

"The army is undergoing a chaste reformation.

"The navy will be reduced to the legal establishment by the last of this month.

"Agencies in every department will be revised.

"We shall push you to the uttermost in economizing.

"A very early recommendation had been given to the postmaster-general, to employ no printer, foreigner, or revolutionary tory, in any of his offices. This department is still untouched.

"The arrival of Mr. Gallatin, yesterday, completed the organization of our administration."

To Levi Lincoln, July 11: "The consolidation of our fellow-citizens in general, is the great object we ought to keep in view; and that being once obtained, while we associate with us in affairs, to a certain degree, the federal sect of republicans, we must strip of all the means of influence the Essex junto, and their associate monocrats in every part of the Union. The former differ from us only in the shades of power to be given to the executive, being, with us, attached to republican government. The latter wish to sap the republic by fraud, if they can not destroy it by force, and to erect an English monarchy in its place. We are proceeding gradually in the regeneration of offices, and introducing republicans to some share in them. I do not know that it will be pushed further than was settled before you went away, except as to Essex men. I must ask you to make out a list of those in office in yours and the neighboring states, and to furnish me with it."

To the same, August 26: "I had foreseen, years ago, that the first republican president who should come into office after all the places in the government had been exclusively occupied by federalists, would have a dreadful operation to perform. That the republicans would consent to a continuation of everything in federal hands, was not to be expected, because neither just nor politic. On him, then, was to devolve the office of an executioner, that of lopping off. I can not say that it has worked harder than I expected. You know the moderation of our views in this business, and that we all concurred in them. We determined to proceed with deliberation. This produced impatience in the republicans, and a belief we meant to do nothing. Some occasion of public explanation was eagerly desired, when the New Haven remonstrance offered us that occasion. The answer was meant as an explanation to our friends. It has had on them, everywhere, the most wholesome effect. Appearances of schismatizing from us have been entirely done away. I own I expected it would check the current with which the republican federalists were returning to their brethren, the republicans. I extremely lamented this effect. For the moment which should convince me that a healing of the nation into one, is impracticable, would be the last moment of my wishing to remain where I am. (Of the monarchical federalists I have no expectations. They are incurables, to be taken care of in a mad-house, if necessary, and on motives of charity.) I am much pleased, therefore, with your information that the republican federalists are still coming in to the desired union. I am satisfied that the heaping of abuse on me personally, has been with the design and the hope of provoking me to make a general sweep of all federalists out of office. But as I have carried no passion into the execution of this disagreeable duty, I shall suffer none to be excited. The clamor which has been raised will not provoke me to remove one more, nor deter me from removing one less, than if not a word had been said on the subject. In the course of the summer, all which is necessary will be done; and we may hope that, this cause of offence being at an end, the measures we shall pursue and propose for the amelioration of the public affairs, will be so confessedly salutary as to unite all men not monarchists in principle.

"We have considerable hopes of republican senators from South Carolina, Maryland, and Delaware, and some as to Vermont. In any event we are secure of a majority in the senate; and consequently that there will be a concert of action between the legislature and executive. The removal of excrescences from the judiciary is the universal demand."

The seventh Congress assembled at Washington, on the 7th of December, 1801. In the senate, Aaron Burr, vice-president, presiding, political parties were nearly equally divided, at first, but eventually there was a majority in favor of the administration. Abraham Baldwin (democrat) was elected president *pro tem.* The majority of the house of representatives was also democratic, and Nathaniel Macon, a distinguished friend of Mr. Jefferson, from North Carolina, was elected speaker. This session of Congress continued till the 3d of May, 1802—138 days. The custom which had been established by General Washington, for the president to deliver in person his address to Congress, after the opening of the session, was discontinued by Mr. Jefferson, who transmitted his communication by message. In this change made by Mr. Jefferson, he appears to have had in view the convenience of Congress, the economy of their time, their relief from the embarrassment of immediate answers on subjects not yet fully before them, and the more republican form of this method of addressing the national legislature, than that by speeches. In these respects its advantages were deemed so apparent, that the communication with Congress, by message, has been invariably adopted on every subsequent occasion.

The suggestions of the president for the revision of measures of the federalists, among others, for the repeal of internal taxes, the reduction of the diplomatic corps, the hauling up of the navy, the abolition of certain offices, and revision of the judiciary, were taken into consideration by Congress. A bill was passed to repeal the recent law establishing circuit courts, by which the judges who had been appointed by Mr. Adams were expelled from office. In the house of representatives the two great champions in debate on this bill were James A. Bayard and William B. Giles. The former contended that Congress had not the power to deprive the judges of their stations, by the indirect course of repealing the law under which they were appointed. In the senate the two principal speakers were Gouverneur Morris and Stephens T. Mason. The leading arguments in favor of the repeal were, that the new courts were useless, and that there was no constitutional objection to abolishing them. By the opponents of the administration, an act repealing any part of the judiciary system was considered ominous to the independence of the judicial department, but as no attempt was made to demolish the supreme court, by altering the constitution, and as the new circuit courts might be dispensed with, without much inconvenience to the public, the apprehensions of the federalists on this subject gradually subsided.

The other most important acts of this session, were, the apportionment of representation by the census of 1800, the ratio being continued at one representative for 33,000 inhabitants; for protecting American commerce and seamen against Tripolitan cruisers which had previously captured our vessels; for fixing the military peace establishment, which provided for the continuance only of one regiment of artillery, two regiments of infantry, and a corps of engineers to be stationed at West Point, on the Hudson river, and to constitute a military academy at that place; for regulating trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes, and for the preservation of peace on the frontiers; for discontinuing the several acts laying internal taxes on stills, distilled spirits, refined sugars, carriages, stamped paper, and licenses to retailers and for sales at auction; for establishing a uniform system of naturalization, and repealing former laws on the subject (the time of residence of aliens in the United States was reduced to five years, in conformity with the suggestion of President Jefferson, instead of fourteen years, as required by the act of 1798); for redeeming the public debt, by which it was provided to appropriate annually seven millions and three hundred thousand dollars to the sinking fund; for authorizing the people of the eastern division of the territory northwest of the Ohio river (Ohio), to form a constitution and state government, and for admitting such state into the Union; authorizing the erection of certain lighthouses; and for altering and establishing certain postroads, and for the more secure carriage of the mail. The act passed in 1799, to augment the salaries of certain officers of government, was revived, and continued in force for two years.

An attempt was made to discontinue the mint establishment, on account of the great expense attending it, but the senate did not concur in the bill for that purpose which passed the house. A proposition for abolishing the navy department, and placing the concerns of the navy under the direction of the secretary of war also failed at this session. The disbanding of the provisional army, which had been ordered by the preceding Congress, operated to reduce very considerably the national expenses. But the act now passed to provide for the redemption of the public debt, was only nominal in its operations; new loans were effected, and the reduction of the debt by the act was only in theory, as the appropriations for expenses for 1802 were more than equal to the receipts of the previous year.

It was the policy of the party now in power, to attach odium to their opponents for the measures of preceding administrations, and to impress upon the public mind the idea that they were more anxious than their predecessors to secure the liberty and to lessen the burdens of the people. But, in many important particulars, the course pursued by former administrations, was still followed; the democratic party being satisfied with the possession of the control of the appointing power of the general government, and with the repeal of such prominent federal measures as they deemed unpopular. They were not, therefore, anxious to suggest new measures of a positive character.

The report of the new secretary of the treasury stated that the accounts of his federal predecessor in that department, also of the state, war, and navy departments, were correct; no delinquencies having occurred.

At the second session of the same Congress, which lasted from the 6th of December, 1802, to the 3d of March, 1803, no changes in the general policy of the administration being proposed by the president, but few acts of general interest were passed; the most important was a law to prevent the importation of negroes, mulattoes, or other persons of color (not being natives, citizens, or seamen of the United States, or seamen, natives of countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope), into any port of the United States within a state which had prohibited by law the admission of any such negro or person of color, under penalty of one thousand dollars and the forfeiture of the vessel in which such person was imported. The time had not then arrived when the importation of slaves was prohibited by the constitution, and this law was passed in conformity to the laws of certain states which had been passed to prohibit the importation of slaves.

Another important act of this Congress, was one which authorized the president to call upon the executives of such of the states as he might deem expedient, for a detachment of militia, not exceeding eighty thousand, or to accept the services of any corps of volunteers, in lieu of militia, for a term of twelve months. Twenty-five thousand dollars were, by the same act, appropriated for the erection of arsenals on the western waters.

There was at this time much apprehension of a war with Spain, which induced Congress to take the measures of precaution abovementioned. The disputes with the Spanish government respecting the southwestern boundary line of the United States, and the right of navigating the Mississippi, had often caused difficulties between the people of the west and southwest and the Spanish authorities and inhabitants of the Spanish territories. These affairs assumed a new aspect by the intelligence received in the United States in the spring of 1802, that Spain, by a secret treaty, in October, 1800, had ceded Louisiana to France. By a treaty with Spain, in 1795, that government had granted to the United States the right of deposite at New Orleans for three years, after which the privilege was either to be continued, or an equivalent place assigned on another part of the banks of the Mississippi. In October, 1802, the Spanish intendant declared, by proclamation, that the right of deposite at New Orleans no longer existed.

This measure caused much excitement among the people of the western states and territories in the valley of the Mississippi. Congress was beset from all quarters with complaints and statements of grievances. The excitement increased as soon as the petitioners heard the news of the cession to France, and, according to the generally-received opinion, the suspension had only taken place in consequence of the demand of the French government. The Spaniards, nevertheless, considered themselves masters of Louisiana, so long as the formalities of the cession to France were not fulfilled. By the terms of the treaty between Spain and France, Louisiana "was to be delivered up in its present state" to the French. This present state was believed to be the exclusion of the Americans from the port of New Orleans. Americans drew from this circumstance the inference that the Spanish intendant had not acted without orders, that the prohibition had been concerted between the two powers, to enforce which an army was then expected from France.

Mr. Jefferson had information of the cession of Louisiana to France, early in 1802, and wrote Mr. Livingston, United States minister to France, in April, 1802, giving his views on the subject. It was understood that the Floridas either were included in the cession of Louisiana, or would be added to it, a supposition which proved to be incorrect. The views of the president, as stated to Mr. Livingston, were, that if France took possession of New Orleans the United States must become allies of Great

Britain and antagonists of France. He then suggests, however, that if France considers Louisiana as indispensable to her interests, she may still cede to the United States the island of New Orleans and the Floridas. That this cession would, in a great degree, remove the causes of irritation, and at any time prevent the necessity of resorting to arrangements with Great Britain.

The cession of Louisiana to France, was first communicated to Congress by the president, in his annual message, in December, 1802, in which the subject is briefly noticed. It was, however, soon seized upon by the opponents of the administration, and resolutions were offered by Mr. Griswold, of Connecticut, in the house, calling upon the president for information respecting the cession of Louisiana; and in the senate, by Mr. Ross, of Pennsylvania, seconded by Gouverneur Morris, of New York, authorizing the president to take possession of such places in or near New Orleans as he deemed fit, and to call into service the militia of the adjoining states with the forces of the nation.

These resolutions were superseded by others, but the right of navigating the Mississippi was asserted by both houses, and a place of deposite insisted on.

The president seemed to think that it was the object of the federal party in Congress to force the country into a war with Spain, "in order to derange our finances," and if that could not be done, "to attach the western country to them, as their best friends, and thus get again into power." With a view of carrying his pacific policy into effect, he, on the 10th of January, 1803, appointed James Monroe, minister plenipotentiary to France, to act with Mr. Livingston in the purchase of New Orleans and the Floridas. The nomination of Mr. Monroe was confirmed by the senate, and Congress appropriated, at the request of Mr. Jefferson, two millions of dollars for the objects of the mission.

The instructions to Messrs. Monroe and Livingston only asked for the cession of the city of New Orleans and the Floridas; that the course of the Mississippi should be divided by a line that would put New Orleans within the territory of the United States, thus securing the free navigation of the river. Projects for the cession of the entire colony of Louisiana, were at that time neither popular, nor, if entertained by any, were they the subjects of much discussion.

Mr. Livingston, the American minister at Paris, was persuaded that the United States would never possess New Orleans by treaty, and that it ought to be taken by force. Mr. Monroe sailed from New York on the 8th of March, 1803, but as the object of his mission was kept secret, the public apprehension was not quieted.

Napoleon Bonaparte was then first consul of France. He supposed, when informed of the instructions to Monroe and Livingston, that those ministers were authorized, if necessary, to enter into more extended stipulations in relation to the projected acquisition. Europe was then enjoying a momentary respite after the wars and revolutions she had undergone. But another war was about breaking out between France and England.

The Marquis de Marbois was directed by Napoleon to negotiate with the American ministers. "Irresolution and deliberation," said the first consul, "are no longer in season. I renounce Louisiana. It is not only New Orleans that I will cede; it is the whole colony, without any reservation. I know the price of what I abandon, and I have sufficiently proved the importance that I attach to this province, since my first diplomatic act with Spain had for its object the recovery of it. I renounce it with the greatest regret. To attempt to retain it would be folly. I direct you to negotiate this affair with the envoys of the United States. Do not even wait the arrival of Mr. Monroe: have an interview this very day with Mr. Livingston. But I require a great deal of money for this war, and I would not like to commence with new contributions. If I should regulate my terms, according to the value of these vast regions to the United States, the indemnity would have no limits. I will be moderate, in consideration of the necessity in which I am of making a sale. But keep this to yourself. I want fifty millions [francs], and for less than that sum I will not treat; I would rather make a desperate attempt to keep those fine countries. To-morrow you shall have full powers. Mr. Monroe is on the point of arriving. To this minister the president must have given secret instructions, more extensive than the ostensible authorization of Congress, for the stipulation of the payments to be made. Neither this minister nor his colleague is prepared for a decision which goes infinitely beyond anything that they are about to ask of us. Begin by making them the overture without any subterfuge. You will acquaint me, day by day, hour by hour, of your progress. The cabinet of London is informed of the measures adopted at Washington, but it can have no suspicion of those which I am now taking. Observe the greatest secresy, and recommend it to the American ministers; they have not a less interest than yourself in conforming to this counsel. You will correspond with M. de Talleyrand, who alone knows my intentions. If I attended to his advice, France would confine her ambition to the left bank of the Rhine, and would only make war to protect any dismemberment of her possessions. But he also admits that the cession of Louisiana is not a dismemberment of France. Keep him informed of the progress of this affair."

The conferences began the same day, between Mr. Livingston and M. Barbé Marbois, to whom the first consul confided this negotiation. But the American minister had not the necessary powers. He had resided at Paris about two years. The first object of his mission had been indemnities claimed by his countrymen for prizes made by the French during peace. The vague answers, and even the expectations that had been held out to him, had been attended with no result. Having, therefore, become distrustful, Mr. Livingston feared that the overtures relating to Louisiana were only an artifice to gain time. He received, without putting entire confidence in it, the overture which was made to him by Marbois, of a cession of the whole province. However, after some discussion on a sum that was vaguely brought forward, he refused to go beyond thirty millions of francs, saving an augmentation of this price by the amount of the indemnity to be given for the prizes taken from the Americans in time of peace. He was, indeed, unwilling to agree upon so high a price, unless the stipulation was accompanied by a clause of not making any payments till after the ratification by Congress.*

These preliminary discussions were scarcely entered upon, when information was received of the arrival of Mr. Monroe at Havre. Mr. Livingston, who, Marbois says, was always inclined to feel distrust, in consequence of the many deceptions that had been previously practised upon him, wrote to Mr. Monroe on the 10th of April, to whom he says: "I congratulate you on your safe arrival. We have long and anxiously waited for you. God grant that your mission may answer your and the public expectation. War may do something for us, nothing else would. I have paved the way for you, and if you could add to my memoirs an assurance that we were now in possession of New Orleans, we should do well."

Mr. Monroe arrived at Paris on the 12th of April, 1803. "I wish," said Mr. Livingston to him, "that the resolution offered by Mr. Ross, in the senate, had been adopted. Only force can give us New Orleans. We must employ force. Let us first get possession of the country, and negotiate afterward." Mr. Monroe, anxious, though not discouraged, began his conferences the next day, with M. de Marbois. The powers of which he (Monroe) was the bearer, were common to him and Mr. Livingston. The French and American ministers had an equal interest in not allowing the negotiation to linger; it had at last a central point, and made rapid progress. The first difficulties were smoothed by a rare circumstance. The plenipotentiaries, having been long acquainted, were disposed to treat one another with mutual confidence. Marbois had been engaged for thirty-five years in public affairs of great importance. He had, during the whole war of the American revolution, resided near the Congress. The affairs of America had long been familiar to him, and two years and a half of exile to Sinnamari had made him still better acquainted with the wants and general condition of the French colonies.

The three negotiators had seen the origin of the republic of the United States, and for a long time back their respective duties had established between them an intercourse on public affairs, and an intimacy which does not always exist between foreign envoys and the ministers of the powers to whom they are sent. This good understanding of the plenipotentiaries did not prevent their considering it a duty to treat, on both sides, for the conditions most advantageous to their respective countries.

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* Marbois's History of Louisiana.

Mr. Monroe did not hear without surprise the first overtures that were frankly made by M. de Marbois. Instead of the cession of a town and its inconsiderable territory, a vast portion of America was offered to the United States. They only asked for the mere right of navigating the Mississippi, and their sovereignty was about to be extended over the largest rivers of the world. They passed over an interior frontier to carry their limits to the great Pacific ocean.

Deliberation succeeded to astonishment. The two joint plenipotentiaries, without asking an opportunity for concerting measures out of the presence of the French negotiator, immediately entered on explanations, and the conferences rapidly succeeded one another.

The negotiation had three objects: First, the cession, then the price, and finally, the indemnity due for captures by the French of American vessels and cargoes. The subject of the cession was first considered. The full powers of the American plenipotentiaries only extended to an arrangement respecting the left bank of the Mississippi, including New Orleans. It was impossible for them to have recourse to their government for more ample instructions. Hostilities were on the eve of commencing between France and England. The American envoys had not to reflect long to discover that the circumstances in which France was placed, were the most fortunate for their country.

M. de Marbois, from whose history of the cession of Louisiana we have taken the above particulars, then goes on to state, that the American ministers having assumed the responsibility of treating for the purchase of the entire colony, instead of a part only of the same, the terms were soon agreed upon between the negotiators.

The assent of Spain to this negotiation was deemed necessary, as that power had reserved, by the treaty of October 1, 1800, a right of preference, in case of cession by France. But the delays which would have been occasioned by sending from Paris to Madrid, with the usual tardiness in the deliberations of the Spanish cabinet, would have led to a total failure of the negotiation. The treaty was, therefore, not communicated to the Spanish ministry till after its conclusion. They complained bitterly of the little regard that had been paid to a right that was reserved to Spain, and for nearly a year it was impossible to obtain from that court an approbation of the treaty. Finally, on the 10th of February, 1804, Don Pedro Cavallos, the Spanish minister, wrote to Mr. Pinckney, minister of the United States, that "his catholic majesty had thought fit to renounce his opposition to the alienation of Louisiana made by France, notwithstanding the solid reasons on which it is founded: thereby giving a new proof of his benevolence and friendship to the United States."

Two important conventions signed the same day by the American and

French negotiators, were annexed to the treaty, as well as referred to in it. The first related to the payment of the price of the cession. The first consul [Bonaparte], supposing that he carried his valuation very high, had said that he calculated on fifty millions of francs. The French plenipotentiary [Marbois], without entering into any explanation with him, considered this estimate a good deal too low, and, as soon as the price became the subject of conference, stated that it was fixed at eighty millions, and that it would be useless to propose a reduction.

The American plenipotentiaries could not have foreseen that the negotiation would become so important, and they were without special powers to consent to pay the price that was demanded. "Our fellow-citizens," said Mr. Livingston, "have an extreme aversion to public debts; how could we, without incurring their displeasure, burden them with the enormous charge of fifteen millions of dollars?"

M. de Marbois, on his part, insisted upon the first demand of eighty millions, and said, that for the United States, this was a sum very much below the true value of these immense territories.

The two plenipotentiaries finally acquiesced, on condition that twenty millions out of the eighty should be employed in a manner settled by a special convention. This became the third instrument in the negotiation. The cession of Louisiana afforded the means of realizing promises made by the French government, that had been long illusory, namely, to pay the claims of Americans arising from requisitions, seizures, and captures of ships, made in time of peace. The American negotiators consented to pay eighty millions of francs for Louisiana, on condition that twenty millions of this sum should be assigned to the payment of what was due by France to the citizens of the United States.

The payment of the sixty millions of francs to the French government was made through Messrs. Hope and Labouchere, of Amsterdam, and Barings, of London, as no French banker was willing to become the medium of so considerable a pecuniary transaction. The terms agreed on, as well for the payment of what was due to the French treasury, as for the indemnity to the American merchants, were punctually observed. For the payment of the sixty millions, it was agreed that the government of the United States was to create a stock of eleven millions two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, bearing an interest of six per cent. per annum, payable half-yearly in London, Amsterdam, or Paris; the principal of the said stock to be reimbursed at the treasury of the United States in annual payments of not less than three millions of dollars each; of which the first payment was to commence fifteen years after the date of the exchange of ratifications; the stock to be transferred to the government of France, or their agents, in three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty, and after Louisiana should be taken possession of by the United States.

The treaty was concluded on the 30th of April, 1803, and the respective instruments which, were drawn up in French and English, were signed by the three ministers four days afterward. Two months had not then elapsed since Mr. Monroe had sailed from New York for France. As soon as they had signed the important papers, the negotiators rose and shook hands, when Mr. Livingston, expressing the general satisfaction, said: "We have lived long, but this is the noblest work of our whole lives. The treaty which we have just signed has not been obtained by art, or dictated by force; equally advantageous to the two contracting parties, it will change vast solitudes into flourishing districts. From this day the United States take their place among the powers of the first rank; the English lose all exclusive influence in the affairs of America."

The first consul had followed with a lively interest the progress of this negotiation. It will be recollected that he had mentioned fifty millions as the price which he would put on the cession; and it may well be believed that he did not expect to obtain so large a sum. He learned that eighty millions had been agreed on; but that they were reduced to sixty, by the stipulation for American claims on France. To this he at first objected, but being brought to recollect that he had consented to a much smaller sum, he said to Marbois: "It is true, the negotiation does not leave me anything to desire: sixty millions for an occupation that will not, perhaps, last for a day! I would that France should enjoy this unexpected capital, and that it may be employed in works beneficial to her marine. This accession of territory strengthens for ever the power of the United States; and I have just given to England a maritime rival that will sooner or later humble her pride."

Hostilities commenced between France and England on the 22d of May, 1803, by the capture of some French merchant-vessels. On the same day, Bonaparte gave his ratification to the treaty of cession of Louisiana, without waiting for that of the United States. It was important that the accomplishment of this formality on the part of France, should not leave any ground for considering the colony as still French. The ratifications, and their exchange, it was presumed, could experience no delay at Washington; and after these proceedings, and the delivery of possession to the United States, any attempt of the English on Louisiana would have been directed against a province of the American union.

The treaty was received in the United States in July, and was ratified by the senate on the 20th of October, 1803, by 24 votes to 7. It was opposed by the federal party generally, and principally on two grounds, namely, First, that the territory of the United States was already abundantly sufficient for one government of a republican character, and that that there were immense tracts of wild lands to be filled up east of the Mississippi; secondly, that the purchase of Louisiana was unconstitutional; and that if the provisions and plain meaning of the national compact were violated or disregarded, it would prove a most injurious precedent. The government, it was said, might as well purchase Canada, Nova Scotia, Mexico, or Cuba. "There were," says Bradford, "probably some party prejudices operating to produce or reiterate these objections, and to represent the act as at once arbitrary and unconstitutional. The purchase was long a topic of dispute between the friends and the opponents of the administration." Some of the leading federalists, of enlarged views, however, approved of the measure. Among these may be named Gouverneur Morris, whose opinions on this subject have been confirmed by the national experience.

The area of the country thus ceded, according to the claims of France, and the estimate of Mr. Jefferson, exceeded a million of square miles; but all, except a very small proportion of it, was occupied by savages, its natural proprietors. Its inhabitants were principally French, and descendants of French, with a few Spanish creoles, Americans, English, and Germans. The whole number amounted to 80,000, or 90,000 inhabitants, including about 40,000 slaves.

The preceding statements confirm the remarks of Mr. Tucker, in his life of Jefferson: "The American ministers, instead of merely purchasing New Orleans and the Floridas, as had been the first and main object of Mr. Jefferson, were able to effect a purchase of all Louisiana, equal in extent to the whole previous territory of the United States. They owed their good fortune to the war which was so suddenly renewed between France and England, when the government of France, convinced that the possession of Louisiana would soon be wrested from her by the superior naval power of England, readily consented to make sale of it to a third power, and the rather, as the purchase-money was particularly acceptable to France at that time. If fortune had a full share of agency in this acquisition, it is no small praise to the administration that they had foreseen the probability of the result, and had promptly and skilfully availed themselves of the occasion so as best to secure and promote the aggrandizement of their country."

Mr. Jefferson did not think that the constitution authorized this addition to the territory of the United States, and he considered that it would be necessary to obtain a special amendment for that purpose. In a letter to Mr. Breckenridge, he remarks: "The constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for incorporating foreign nations into our Union. The executive, in seizing the fugitive occurrence which so much advances the good of their country, have done an act beyond the constitution. The legislature, in casting behind them metaphysical subtleties, and risking themselves like faithful servants, must ratify and pay for it, and throw themselves on their country for doing for them unauthorized, what we know they would have done for themselves, had they been in a situation to do it. But we shall not be disavowed by the nation, and their act of indemnity will confirm and not weaken the constitution, by more strongly marking out its lines."

The contemplated amendment to the constitution, or "act of indemnity," as Mr. Jefferson calls it, never took place. The treaty received the sanction of the government in its different branches, and the measure was so generally acquiesced in by the people, that after a time it ceased to be a disputed question, either of constitutionality or expediency.

Mr. Jefferson suggested that the less that was said about any constitutional difficulty, the better; and that it was desirable for Congress to do what was necessary in silence. This caution was probably dictated from an apprehension of the effect of such discussions in France, the government of which, as the American ministers were informed, showed a disposition to declare the treaty void, if any pretext were furnished by the United States.

The president, with a view to provide for carrying the Louisiana treaty into effect, called Congress together on the 17th of October, 1803, about three weeks earlier than the day that had been previously fixed by the preceding Congress, when they adjourned in March, 1803.

This was the eighth Congress, and there was a large democratic majority in both branches. Nathaniel Macon, of North Carolina was again chosen speaker of the house.

The treaty was ratified by the senate on the 20th of October, by a vote of 24 to 7, and on the 22d it was officially communicated to both houses, that they might provide for its execution. An act of Congress was passed within fourteen days of the time of assembling, making provision for the occupation and temporary government of Louisiana, under the authority of the president; and eleven millions of dollars were appropriated as the purchase money—the remaining four millions being reserved for the indemnity of American citizens who had sustained losses by French spoliations on our commerce. The general resolution for carrying the treaty into effect, was adopted in the house of representatives by a vote of 90 to 25; and the resolutions for a provincial government and for the appropriation required for the purchase, were passed without a division.

At an early day of this session of Congress, an amendment to the constitution of the United States was proposed, relative to the election of president and vice-president, so as to designate which person was voted for as president, and which as vice-president; instead of the original article, which required the electors to vote for two persons for these offices, of whom the one who had the highest number of votes was to be president. The amendment was proposed by the republicans, to provide against the disappointment which had threatened them at the election in 1801, and which had caused so much bitterness of feeling. The federalists opposed the amendment as an unwise departure from the spirit and design of the constitution, which was, that two persons, fully qualified for the office of chief magistrate, should be voted for, without a specific and exclusive designation of one to the presidency; and thus in case of the death of one, the other, who would succeed, would be equal to the discharge of the high trust. But the political friends of the president were resolved to prevent the recurrence of a similar difficulty with that which had hazarded the choice of Mr. Jefferson in 1801. They also urged in favor of the proposed alteration of the constitution that it was more simple, direct, and proper, to designate which candidate was intended to be president, by the votes of the electors.

The amendment was agreed to, by the votes of two thirds of the members of both branches of Congress, and within the year 1804 it was ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, as required by the constitution. Thirteen states were in favor of it, and three states only, namely, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Delaware, disapproved of the change. This amendment, which forms the 12th article of the amendments to the constitution, was announced by the secretary of state, in a public notice dated the 25th of September, 1804, as having been duly adopted and ratified.

At this session of Congress the salaries of the principal officers of the government were raised nearly twenty per cent. Additional duties were imposed on imports to defray the expenses of the naval establishment then required in the Mediterranean to protect American commerce from the piratical cruisers of Tripoli. The United States navy employed in that sea was small in force, but effectual in checking the operations of the pirates of that quarter. The American officers and men gained much reputation by their valor and good conduct in the contest with Tripoli.

An additional law was passed by Congress on the subject of the naturalization of aliens, and the time of residence required previous to their becoming citizens was placed on its original footing of five years, instead of fourteen. The federalists opposed this law, as they deemed it unreasonable to admit foreigners to all the rights of those born and educated in the United States, until they had resided a longer time in this country, while they were readily allowed protection and equal justice. By a law passed in March, 1804, respecting Louisiana, two separate governments were established in that territory, to be organized as the president might direct.

Judge Pickering, of the district court of the United States for New Hampshire, was impeached before the senate by the house of representatives at this session. The charges against him being proved, showing his unfitness for conducting the business of the court, in consequence of occasional intoxication, he was found guilty, and dismissed from office. The house of representatives also decided to prepare articles of impeachment against Judge Chase, of Maryland, of the supreme court of the United

States, and against Judge Peters, of Pennsylvania, of the United States district court. A committee was appointed to draw up articles in form, but the subject was postponed to the next session.

The friends of the judiciary system and of the independence of the courts, were alarmed at these proceedings, which they thought indicated a disposition in the democratic party to seek occasions to attack the judges and render them odious to the people. Judge Peters was charged with arbitrary and illegal conduct, and the facts alleged were considered fully proved, but his intended impeachment was not further prosecuted. The charges against Judge Chase were for similar oppressive and arbitrary conduct in the trial of a person indicted for treason, and for displaying malignant and party feelings on several occasions, particularly in the trial of a person in Virginia, under the sedition act. The trial before the senate, at the next session, on this impeachment, resulted in the acquittal of the judge.

The bankrupt law which had been enacted under Mr. Adams's administration, was repealed at the first session of the eighth Congress, at the instance, it is believed, of Mr. Jefferson, and certainly with his hearty concurrence, as we are informed by his biographer, Mr. Tucker. As this law authorized a majority of the creditors to discharge a bankrupt trader from all his preceding debts, it was regarded by many of the other classes of the people as an invidious privilege to the mercantile community; especially in the southern states, where the agricultural pursuits are predominant. It was, for this and other reasons, not viewed with favor by a large portion of the people, although many approved of the law, which they considered necessary in a commercial nation like the United States. The question on the repeal was carried in the house of representatives by 99 votes to 13. On the 27th of March, 1804, Congress adjourned, after a session of 163 days.

President Jefferson had, in a confidential message to Congress, in January, 1803, recommended an appropriation for defraying the expense of an exploring expedition across the continent to the Pacific ocean, which appropriation was made, and the enterprise was placed under the direction of Captains Lewis and Clarke. This suggestion was made before the acquisition of Louisiana by the United States, and it had long been a favorite object with Mr. Jefferson to explore this part of North America. Before the expedition was ready to start, however, the treaty with France had been ratified. The exploring party consisted of thirty individuals, including the two leaders, and left the banks of the Mississippi for the Pacific on the 14th of May, 1804. Mr. Jefferson himself prepared the instructions for Captain Lewis, which were drawn up with much wisdom and forecast. The expedition was eminently successful in geographical discoveries, and furnished the first particular information respecting the extensive country between the Mississippi and the Pacific ocean. The exploring party was absent on this service about two years and three months.

The difficulties with Spain had been of long continuance, and related principally to claims to territory on the Mississippi, and numerous spoliations by Spain on American commerce. Some of the people of the United States were in favor of a war with Spain at this period, but pacific counsels prevailed. The objections Spain had made to the Louisiana treaty had been withdrawn, but new difficulties arose in attempts to negotiate a treaty respecting the boundaries and other matters in dispute.*

The presidential election coming on in 1804, Mr. Jefferson was nominated for re-election, and George Clinton, of New York was placed on the ticket with him as a candidate for vice-president, in place of Colonel Burr, who had lost the confidence of the democratic party, which had elected him in 1801. The federalists nominated Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina, for President, and Rufus King, of New York, for vice-president. The result showed the great popularity of Mr. Jefferson's administration; the republican candidates receiving 162 votes, and the federal candidates but 14.

The war with Tripoli was brought to a close by the vigor and energy displayed by the American squadron in the Mediterranean; five frigates having been sent to that quarter in 1804, under the command of Commodore Preble, who soon brought the bey to terms, and peace was restored.

The second session of the eighth Congress commenced on the 5th of November, 1804, and terminated with the expiration of Mr. Jefferson's first term, on the 3d of March, 1805. The public debt had been increased by the purchase of Louisiana, and the Mediterranean fund, or extra duties on imports, was continued, to pay the expenses of the war with Tripoli. For the defence of the American seacoast, the president recommended the gunboat system, which in fact had been commenced in 1803, by an act of Congress authorizing a certain number of gunboats to be built. More of these vessels were now advised by the president, as the cheapest and most effectual means of defence for the harbors of the United States. Congress, neither fulfilling the wishes of the executive, nor altogether resisting them, gave Mr. Jefferson the means of partially trying his favorite scheme, by the appropriation of sixty thousand dollars.

The sufficiency of this species of naval defence occasioned a good deal of discussion at this time, between the opponents and the supporters of the administration. A navy had been vehemently opposed by the republican party during Mr. Adams's presidency, as altogether unsuited to the means of the United States, as inadequate to its defence, and more injurious to their commerce by involving the country in war, than by any protection it could afford. In the meanwhile, the insults to which our merchant ships and seamen were exposed on the ocean, made the commercial states call aloud for some measure of protection. It is probable that these circumstances had an influence in recommending this cheap marine, which promised some defence to our harbors and coasts, and which at the same time did not subject the party in power to the charge of inconsistency. But the scheme was vehemently assailed by the adversaries of Mr. Jefferson, in every form of argument and ridicule, and was triumphantly adduced as a further proof that he was not a practical statesman. The officers of the navy were believed to be, with scarcely an exception, opposed to the system of gunboats, especially those who were assigned to this service. To stem the current of public opinion, which set so strong against these gunboats, and to turn it into their favor, Mr. Jefferson prevailed on Thomas Paine to become their advocate through the newspapers. He set about it with his wonted self-confidence, but in spite of his logic, the public, pinning its faith on experienced men, remained incredulous, and when, soon afterward, many of the new marine were driven ashore in a tempest, or were otherwise destroyed, no one seemed to regard their loss as a misfortune; and the officers of the navy did not affect to conceal their satisfaction; nor has any attempt been since made to replace them.*

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* Bradford.

During this session of Congress there was far less of free and independent discussion on the measures proposed by the friends of the administration, than had been previously practised in both branches of the national legislature. It appeared that on the most important subjects, the course adopted by the majority was the effect of caucus arrangement, or, in other words, had been previously agreed upon at meetings of the democratic members held in private. Thus the legislation of Congress was constantly swayed by party feelings and pledges, rather than according to sound reason or personal conviction. Two important laws were passed at this session, intended to prevent the hostile and predatory acts of persons on board of foreign vessels in the harbors and ports of the United States; and to regulate the clearance of armed American merchant vessels.†

The second presidential term of Mr. Jefferson commenced on the 4th of March, 1805. On that occasion he delivered an inaugural address before the members of Congress and other citizens. He reminds them of the declarations, when he entered on the office of president four years before, of the principles on which he should administer the government, and that his conscience told him he had acted up to them, according to their fair import. He adverts to the liberal principles pursued in our foreign relations, and their success. "We are firmly convinced," he says, "and we act on that conviction, that with nations, as well as individuals, our interests, soundly calculated, will ever be found inseparable from our moral duties." He speaks with exultation of the reduction of taxes and suppression of unnecessary offices, and yet with a revenue, which is levied on foreign luxuries, and paid by wealthy consumers, is sufficient to defray the expenses of the government, to fulfil contracts with other governments and the Indians, and to afford a surplus sufficient to redeem the public debt within a short period. That the revenue, when thus liberated, may by a just repartition among the states, and a correspondent amendment to the constitution, be applied, *in time of peace*, to "rivers, canals, roads, arts, manufactures, education, and other great objects, in each state, and *in time of war*, it may meet all the annual expenditure within the year. He suggests that the newly-acquired territory will pay for itself before we are called upon to pay the purchase money. He notices and answers the objection that our territory has thereby been too much enlarged. He speaks of the condition of the Indian tribes as imposing new duties both on our justice and humanity—says that now being reduced within limits too narrow for the hunter's state, they should be taught agriculture and the domestic arts, and thus be prepared for civilized society; that their own prejudices present great obstacles to this change, for they too "have their anti-philosophers," who dread reformation.

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* Tucker's Life of Jefferson.

† Bradford.

In presenting the foregoing outline of his administration, he disclaims arrogating to himself the merit of the measures which, he says, is due to the character of his fellow-citizens, their representatives in Congress, and his associates in the executive department. Adverting to the virulence of the press against him, he says that the punishment of the offenders had been left altogether to the public indignation; that the experiment thus made whether "freedom of discussion, unaided by power, was not sufficient for the protection and propagation of truth, had proved successful;" that our fellow-citizens, when called to decide the question by their suffrage, "had pronounced their verdict, honorable to those who had served them, and consolatory to the friend of man, who believes he may be intrusted with his own affairs." He disclaims making any objections to the laws of the states against defamatory publications, which he thinks may exercise a salutary coercion; and in allusion to the sedition laws, says that they draw the only definite line between the inestimable liberty of the press and its demoralizing licentiousness. "If," he remarks, "there is any impropriety which the state laws can not reach, the defect may be supplied by the censorship of public opinion." He congratulates the country on the union of sentiment lately manifested, and anticipates that those who have not yet rallied to the same point, have an increasing disposition to do so; in the meantime, forbearance is inculcated. He speaks with confidence of the principles which will govern him in his future administration. He is sensible of no passion which could "seduce him knowingly from the path of justice, but being liable to err, from the weakness of human judgment, he should need their continued indulgence, and not the less for his increasing years."

In the election for members of Congress, the preponderance of the democratic party was not as great as in the election of president. Of 142 members of the house of representatives, about 40 were federalists, and subsequent events caused the latter to be occasionally joined by a section of dissatisfied republicans; still the administration was enabled generally to sustain its measures by a majority of both houses.

The ninth Congress assembled on the 2d of December, 1805, when Mr. Macon, of North Carolina, was for the third time elected speaker. Three days after the annual message of the president was communicated to Congress, he sent in a confidential message on the subject of our relations with Spain, the controversies with that power still remaining unsettled. This message was referred to a select committee, of which Mr. John Randolph, of Virginia, was chairman, and by the proceedings on this subject, it soon became evident that Mr. Randolph, who had been considered a leader in the ranks of the democratic party in the house, was no longer to be relied on as a supporter of the administration.

The cause of this gentleman's defection and opposition (as we are informed by Mr. Tucker, in his life of Jefferson), was his displeasure at the refusal of the president to appoint him minister to England; an office unsolicited by Mr. Randolph himself, but applied for by some of the Virginia delegation in Congress, who urged the executive to give him the appointment. When the application and rejection were made known to Mr. Randolph, he was deeply offended, and was soon found in the ranks of the opposition, the public referring his change to his resentment.

On the 3d of January, 1806, the select committee, of which Mr. Randolph was chairman, made a report declaring that the aggressions of Spain afforded ample cause of war, but that peace was the policy and interest of the United States, and they hoped that Spain would find motives for fulfilling her engagements, and preserving her friendly relations with the United States. Yet, as their territory had been insulted, the committee submitted a resolution—that such a number of troops as the president should deem sufficient to protect the southern frontier, be immediately raised.

On the same day a resolution was submitted by Mr. Bidwell, of Massachusetts, a prominent democratic member—that an appropriation be made for the purpose of defraying any extraordinary expenses that might be incurred in the intercourse between the United States and foreign nations, to be borrowed and applied under the direction of the president.

The first resolution was deemed by the administration and its friends, likely to involve the nation in a war with Spain, and eventually with France; and the second was suggested as the means of preventing such a result, by enabling the president to purchase Florida. After a warm debate in secret session, until the 11th of January, the first resolution, for raising troops, was rejected, by a vote of 72 against it to 58 in its favor. The minority was made up of the federal members, and some fifteen or twenty democrats.

Mr. Bidwell's resolution, respecting the appropriation for the purchase of Florida, finally passed, after much debate, and the sum appropriated was two millions of dollars.

The secret debate continued to the 6th of February, during which the minority so far prevailed as to obtain a declaration of opinion that " an exchange of territory between the United States and Spain would be the most advantageous mode of settling the existing differences about their respective boundaries," to which arrangement it was asserted the president was opposed. The vote, however, in favor of the resolution, was 80 to 52.

The course of Mr. Randolph, who carried a few of the republican party with him, created, at first, a sudden alarm and confusion among those who remained firm in the administration ranks. They, however, soon rallied, and continued in unbroken phalanx for the remainder of Mr. Jefferson's term. The opposition, however, reinforced by the acquisition of Mr. Randolph and his friends, assailed the administration at every point, and often created embarrassment, when they were unable to produce defeat.

The interruptions to American commerce by Great Britain, on the ground that a neutral can not carry on a trade in time of war which is not permitted to it in peace, had excited great feeling throughout all the commercial states; and most of the principal towns had memorialized Congress or the executive on the subject. The continued impressment of American seamen afforded a further cause of complaint. The president having, on the 17th of January, sent a message to Congress on these subjects, with the memorials received by the executive, various propositions were submitted relative thereto, in the house of representatives. On the 17th of March, the house agreed to the policy of prohibiting the importation of specific articles of British growth or manufacture, by a vote of 87 to 35, the federalists generally voting in the minority. The bill laying this prohibition passed the house on the 28th of March, by a vote of 93 to 32—federalists, with Mr. Randolph and two or three of his friends, constituting the minority. On the 15th of April it passed the senate, by a vote of 19 to 9. The prohibition was to take effect on the 11th day of November.

A bill was also passed interdicting all intercourse with the French part of the island of Hayti, which had been revolutionized by the blacks. The sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars was appropriated for fortifying the ports and harbors of the United States, and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for building gunboats.

The other important measures were of a domestic character. Of these the first in importance as a precedent and as a measure of utility, was the act for the construction of a national road from Cumberland, in Maryland, to the state of Ohio, which passed on the 24th of March, 1806, by a vote of 66 to 50. It was opposed on the constitutional ground that the power of making roads was not given to Congress; but to obviate this objection, the consent of the states through whose territories the road was to pass (Maryland, Virginia, and Ohio) was first required. Yet if Congress had not the power of making roads, as was contended, the consent of these states could not give it.* The bill passed, however, with the approval of President Jefferson, but the question continued to be long afterward a subject of controversy between those who were severally disposed to a strict and a liberal construction of the constitution.

Congress adjourned on the 21st of April, after a most animated and contentious session, the house of representatives having been the scene of constant bickering between the three parties into which it was divided, owing to the schism in the republican or democratic party, already referred to. Those democrats who acted with Mr. Randolph, differed from the administration on some leading points of foreign policy, but while they voted with the federalists on these questions, and on some collateral points, they took especial care not to be considered by the nation as being merged in the federal party, not only by their general declarations, but by their votes on all questions not involving the policy of the administration, on which occasions they concurred with the republicans. This party consisted principally of members from Virginia, and were all personally intimate with Mr. Randolph. This same party afterward received a great accession of strength in Virginia, by bringing forward Mr. Monroe as a candidate for the presidency, in opposition to Mr. Madison, and it was not until the reconciliation of these gentlemen, by the good offices of Mr. Jefferson, that its ranks were broken as a party, and that some of the scattered fragments united with the federalists, in opposition to the war and all the leading measures of the administration which preceded it.†

Immediately after the decision of Congress to appropriate two millions of dollars for the purchase of Florida, the president appointed General Armstrong, of New York, and Mr. Bowdoin, of Massachusetts, joint commissioners to effect, if practicable, a treaty, and an amicable settlement at Paris of all matters of dispute with Spain; the affairs of that power being then closely connected with those of France. The negotiation respecting the purchase of Florida having failed, the money appropriated for that purpose was never drawn from the treasury. The Hornet sloop-of-war was despatched to France with letters of credit, to be used, if wanted, by the American ministers at Paris, for the purchase of Florida, which gave rise to a report in the United States, that two millions in specie were carried to France in that vessel, and actually paid to Bonaparte, without any consideration whatever. There was a want of cordiality between the two American ministers at Paris, Messrs. Bowdoin and Armstrong, which gradually ripened into an open collision. Mr. Monroe (who had, after negotiating the Louisiana treaty with France, in 1803, been appointed minister to Great Britain, to succeed Mr. Rufus King) was called upon, in 1805, to join Mr. Charles Pinckney, the resident minister at Madrid, for the purpose of settling with Spain the disputed question of the boundaries of Louisiana. After spending five months with his colleague, Mr. Pinckney, at Madrid, in unavailing efforts to settle the disputes with Spain, Mr. Monroe returned to London in June, 1805. In May, 1806, Mr. William Pinkney, of Maryland, was associated with Mr. Monroe in the negotiation then in progress with Great Britain.

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* Tucker's Life of Jefferson.

† Ibid.

In his private correspondence with Mr. Monroe at this time, Mr. Jefferson expressed a desire for a permanent peace with England. Mr. Fox, the leader of the whig party, being then a member of the British cabinet, Mr. Jefferson wrote to Mr. Monroe as follows: "The late change in the ministry I consider as insuring us a just settlement of our differences, and we ask no more. In Mr. Fox, personally, I have more confidence than in any man in England, and it is founded in what, through unquestionable channels, I have had opportunities of knowing of his honesty and good sense. While he shall be in the administration, my reliance on that government will be solid. We had committed ourselves in a line of proceeding adapted to meet Mr. Pitt's policy and hostility, before we heard of his death [alluding to the non-importation law], which self-respect did not permit us to abandon afterward. It ought not to be viewed by the ministry as looking toward them at all, but merely as the consequences of the measures of their predecessors, which their nation has called on them to correct. I hope, therefore, they will come to just arrangements. No two countries upon earth have so many points of common interest and friendship; and their rulers must be great bunglers indeed, if, with such dispositions, they break them asunder. The only rivalry that can arise is on the ocean. We ask for peace and justice from all nations, and we will remain uprightly neutral in fact, though leaning in belief to the opinion that an English ascendency on the ocean is safer for us than that of France."

In the year 1806, the public mind was much excited by the expedition of Colonel Burr in the western country, which was supposed to have had for its object the dissevering of the Union and the establishment of an independent government west of the Allegany mountains. But the circumstances which were disclosed at his trial seemed rather to indicate an expedition against the Spanish provinces of Mexico and adjoining territories. Burr was arrested near Fort Stoddard, on the banks of the Tombigbee river, then in the Mississippi territory, in February, 1807, and thence conducted as a prisoner to Richmond, Virginia, where he was indicted by the grand jury, for high treason, in June following. He was put on trial, before Judges Marshall and Gilpin, and acquitted in August of the same year. The verdict was, "We of the jury say, that Aaron Burr is not proved to be guilty under this indictment, by any evidence submitted to us. We therefore find him not guilty." Burr was tried at the same court on an indictment for misdemeanor, and acquitted.

The second session of the 9th Congress lasted from the first of December, 1806, to the 3d of March, 1807. The president informed the house that the negotiation with Great Britain was proceeding in a spirit of accommodation, since the delay occasioned by the death of the British minister (Mr. Fox) charged with that duty. He mentioned that the American ministers at London (Monroe and Pinkney) had suggested that a temporary suspension of the non-importation act would have a happy effect on the course of the negotiation. In pursuance of this recommendation, a bill was passed in the house on the 6th of December, with only five dissentients, to suspend the act to the 1st of July, and amended in the senate so as to authorize the president to suspend it to the second Monday in December succeeding.

An appropriation of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars was voted by the house for building thirty gunboats—ayes 68, noes 36. In conformity with the recommendation of the president, a law was passed to prohibit the African slave-trade after the 1st of January, 1808. The tax on salt was repealed, and the extra duties for the Mediterranean fund were continued. Congress also made a liberal compensation to Captains Lewis and Clarke and their companions, in donations of land, for their services in the important expedition across the Rocky mountains to the Pacific.

In the negotiation of a treaty with Great Britain, Mr. Fox, while in the cabinet, but a short time before his death, was prevented by indisposition from taking part, and before it had made much progress the nation was called upon to mourn for his decease. As Mr. Jefferson anticipated a complete change of ministry from this event, with his hopes of a successful negotiation greatly moderated, he thought it prudent to give more explicit instructions to the American envoys. They were therefore informed of his views on the subjects of impressments, neutral commerce, blockades, East and West India trade, and indemnification; and they were instructed not to enter into any treaty which did not provide some security against the impressment of American seamen. These despatches were, however, too late. They were dated the 3d of February, 1807, and a treaty was signed in London on the 31st of December preceding, by Messrs. Monroe and Pinkney on the part of the United States, and on the part of Great Britain by Lords Holland and Aukland.

The day before Congress rose, the president received from Mr. Erskine, the British minister at Washington, a copy of the treaty, and it fell so far short of what he conceived to be the just claims of the United States, as well as of his instructions, that he decided at once on not submitting it to the senate, but to try the effect of further negotiation. Besides other objections, there were two that were insuperable. These were, that the treaty contained no provision whatever on the subject of impressment; and because it was accompanied by a note from the British ministers, by which the British government reserved to itself the right of releasing itself from the stipulations in favor of neutral rights, if the United States submitted to the Berlin decree, or other invasion of those rights by France.

The treaty consisted of twenty-six articles, and confirmed the permanent and unexpired articles in Mr. Jay's treaty of 1794. On the subject of the rights of neutrals, and some other points, the two treaties were substantially the same. One of the new features in the treaty of 1806, was, that Great Britain consented that the United States should have a circuitous trade with the colonies of her enemies during the existing hostilities. This treaty was more favorable to the United States than that of 1794, in some respects, and less advantageous in limiting the trade to the British colonies in India to direct voyages, and in providing no compensation for illegal captures. Mr. Tucker, in his life of Jefferson, remarks, that as a treaty of navigation and commerce it was not better than that negotiated by Mr. Jay; and that Mr. Jefferson could not, with any regard either to the equal rights of his country, or to his own consistency, have given it the sanction of his approbation, even had it been free from the two insuperable objections that have been mentioned.

The course of the president, in rejecting the treaty with Great Britain, was soon publicly known, and caused great excitement throughout the nation. The commercial community particularly, regretted the rejection of the treaty, and the federal party were loud in their denunciations of the president, on public occasions, in conversation, and through the opposition press. It was insisted that the president ought to have laid the treaty before the senate; and if they approved, to adopt it, as it was, or to propose some modification of it, as was done in the case of the treaty made with France in 1801. The American envoys, Monroe and Pinkney, had signed the treaty, and they were the political friends of the president; and it was believed that one more favorable could not be obtained; that it was to be preferred to open war, or entire non-intercourse with Great Britain, for which some then contended, as the best policy. A rejection of the treaty, it was feared, might lead to immediate hostilities, and a system of non-intercourse would greatly diminish American commerce and navigation, and also provoke Great Britain to retaliate by increased depredations, under color of exercising her belligerent rights, as necessary to her own safety against the naval policy of France, her powerful rival and enemy.

The democratic party fully justified the president. They insisted that the advice of the senate could not bind him, and ought not to prevail against his opinion. That it was a matter of discretion and prerogative with him to submit it to the senate or not; that if in great doubt himself, he might lay the subject before that body, and if they advised to its adoption, to give it his consent, and place the responsibility on them. This might have been the most prudent course; but if he was decidedly opposed to the treaty, as injurious and dishonorable, he ought, as chief magistrate, to have the power to withhold it. The adoption of the treaty without the additional note or article of the British ministers, would have been more consistent with good policy, in a neutral government, as that of the United States then was; and would have manifested a sincere desire to conciliate Great Britain, whose good will toward America was highly important. The rejection of the treaty had an unfavorable effect on the British government and their naval commanders. They thought they saw in it an unwillingness on the part of the president to conciliate that nation, or to preserve friendly relations between the two countries.*

The American ministers who negotiated the treaty with England, complained of the manner in which it was received, as they considered it highly advantageous to this country, particularly with regard to two points of dispute, namely, the rights of neutrals and the practice of blockade adopted by England. On the third point in dispute, that the American flag should protect all who sailed under it, England, her ministers said, could not concede this without abandoning her maritime force; and while this point was a *sine qua non* no adjustment with her could be effected. Yet Pinkney and Monroe obtained assurances from the British ministry, though not in the form of a treaty, which they deemed satisfactory. It was expressly offered by the British government, when it asserted a right to take its own subjects wherever found, after requesting their surrender of the commander of the vessel to which they then belonged, that its ships-of-war should give up any American citizens on board, on request and proof that they were such.

There can be but little doubt that the refusal to ratify the treaty with Great Britain negotiated by Monroe and Pinkney, was a primary cause of the embargo and other restrictive measures which soon after followed, and finally led to the war of 1812.

The change of ministry in England, by the death of Mr. Fox, placed Mr. Canning in the cabinet, as secretary for foreign affairs. In their interviews with Mr. Canning, after they were informed of the president's rejection of the treaty, the American ministers were soon satisfied that there was little probability of a more successful negotiation. In conformity with instructions received from Mr. Madison, secretary of state, Messrs. Monroe and Pinkney addressed a note to Mr. Canning, on the 24th of July, 1807, proposing a renewal of the negotiation, and submitted to him the alterations they proposed in the rejected treaty. The attack on the Chesapeake frigate caused a suspension of correspondence, so that Mr. Canning did not reply to the American ministers until the 22d of October, when, after justifying the reservation made of the right to retaliate the French decrees, and insisting that the subject of the "impressment of British seamen from merchant vessels" formed no part in the treaty, and was entitled only to a separate and subsequent discussion, he protests, in behalf of his government, "against a practice, altogether unusual in the political transactions of states, by which the American government assumes to itself the privilege of revising and altering agreements concluded and signed in its behalf by its agents duly authorized for that purpose; of retaining so much of those agreements as may be favorable to its own views; and of rejecting such stipulations, or parts of stipulations, as are conceived to be not sufficiently beneficial to America." He therefore informs the American ministers that the proposal "for proceeding to negotiate anew, upon the basis of a treaty already solemnly concluded and signed, is wholly inadmissible."*

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* Bradford.

In a letter to Mr. Monroe, Mr. Jefferson remarked, if the treaty could not be made more acceptable, the next best thing was to let the negotiation die away insensibly, and in the meantime, to agree informally that both parties should act on the principles of the treaty, so as to preserve a friendly understanding. He adds, that as soon as Mr. Monroe sees the amendment of the treaty is desperate, he can follow his desire of returning home. Mr. Monroe therefore returned to the United States at the close of the year 1807.

At this time the British maintained a squadron which cruised along the coast of the United States, under pretence of enforcing belligerent rights. Vessels-of-war belonging to France and to England might come into the ports of the United States. Those of France came, and those of England came to seek them. Five seamen had deserted from the British sloop-of-war Halifax, in March, 1807, and enlisted on board the United States frigate Chesapeake, then lying in Hampton Roads, and commanded by Captain Barron. Four separate demands were made for these men, but without success; one on Lieut. Sinclair, of the Chesapeake; one by the British consul, on the mayor of Norfolk; one on Captain Decatur; and one by the British minister, on the secretary of state. The Chesapeake sailed with these five men on board, but while going down the bay, all but one deserted and got on shore.

On the 23d of June, when at sea, not far from the capes of Virginia, the Chesapeake was met by the British ship Leopard, of fifty guns, commanded by Captain Humphreys. The Chesapeake carried forty-four guns. Humphreys sent his boat with a note to Barron, informing him that his commanding officer, Admiral Berkeley, had directed him to take any British deserters on board the Chesapeake, by force if necessary, and to allow on his part of a search for American deserters. Captain Barron refused permission to search, and stated that he had instructed his recruiting officer not to enlist British subjects, and that he had no knowledge that any were on board. On this answer being received, the Leopard fired into the Chesapeake, and the latter being taken by surprise, and unprepared for action, did not return the fire, and immediately struck her flag. A boat from the Leopard having been then sent to the Chesapeake, the American officers tendered their swords to the British officer commanding, but he declined receiving them, demanded the muster-roll of the ship, and having taken off four men, whom he claimed as British subjects, left the Chesapeake, which then returned to Hampton Roads. Three of these men had previously entered the British service, but were Americans by birth, and had been formally demanded at Washington.*

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* Tucker.

This was a gross outrage on the part of the British commander, whatever the provocation may have been, because the universally-acknowledged principle is, that a national ship at sea and the territory of its nation are alike inviolable. The British government so understood this matter, and disavowed the act of its officer, and offered a proper and honorable reparation, which was finally accepted before the war, and therefore this did not make one of the causes which led to that calamity.†

This affair of the Chesapeake excited the indignation of the whole country; both parties cordially united in a desire that the honor of the country should be avenged. Many were anxious for a declaration of war with England, but the president preferred a pacific course, and determined to give Great Britain an opportunity of disavowal and reparation. This course proved a wise one, as the affair was finally amicably settled, after a somewhat tedious negotiation.

The French emperor, Napoleon, was at this period in the full tide of success and conquest, having subdued and brought under his control a large part of continental Europe. But the English navy had nearly destroyed the French power at sea. The battle of Trafalgar annihilated the united fleets of France and Spain; and all the principal ports of the French empire, with a long extent of seacoast, were held in vigorous blockade by the British squadrons.

To retaliate on the British, the Emperor Napoleon devised a new plan of attack, which he called the *Continental System*. The object of this scheme was to cut off all intercourse between the continent of Europe and Great Britain, and thus weaken England by destroying this portion of her commerce.

On the 21st of November, 1806, Napoleon, having defeated the Prussians, and entered Berlin, the capital of that kingdom, issued from the royal palace of that city his celebrated *Berlin decree;* by which he declared the British isles in a state of blockade; and, consequently, that every American or other neutral vessel going to, or coming from, these isles, was subject to capture. The same decree provided that all merchandise belonging to England, or coming from its manufactories, or colonies, although belonging to neutrals, should be lawful prize *on land.* This provision was carried into effect.

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* Tucker.

† Sullivan.

General Armstrong, American minister at Paris, regarded the Berlin decree at first as inapplicable to American commerce, on account of the treaty then existing between the United States and France, but in October, 1807, in answer to his inquiry as to the effect of the decree, the French minister of foreign relations informed him of his mistake. The condemnation of American vessels commenced in November following.

The British government, in retaliation of Napoleon's Berlin decree, issued their famous *orders in council*, dated November 11, 1807. By these orders, all direct trade from America to any part of Europe at war with Great Britain, or which excluded the British flag, was totally prohibited. Goods, however, were allowed to be landed in England, and, after paying duties, might be re-exported to Europe. On the 17th of December succeeding, the orders in council were followed by the *Milan decree* of Napoleon, which declared that every vessel that should submit to be searched by a British man-of-war, or which should touch at a British port, or should pay any impost whatever to the British government, should be *denationalized*, and subject to seizure and condemnation.

These edicts of the two belligerent powers were, of course, destructive to the principal part of the foreign commerce of the United States. American vessels trading directly with French ports were liable to capture by British cruisers; and if they touched at a British port, they were confiscated on arriving in France. The British orders in council operated with the most severity on American commerce, as through their powerful navy the English possessed the means of enforcing them.

The critical situation of our foreign relations induced the president to call the tenth Congress together on the 25th of October, 1807. The democratic majority continued large in both branches. Joseph B. Varnum, a friend of the administration from Massachusetts, was chosen speaker of the house of representatives.

In consequence of the hostile edicts of France and England, the president, in a confidential special message, on the 18th of December, recommended to Congress the passage of an act laying an embargo on all vessels of the United States. The message did not allude to the British order in council, although Mr. Tucker informs us in his life of Jefferson, on the authority of Mr. Madison, then secretary of state, that the government had received information, through an authentic private channel, that the British ministry had issued an order against neutral commerce, in re taliation of the Berlin decree; which information was confirmed by a ministerial English newspaper received at the same time.

The subject was immediately discussed in both houses of Congress, in secret session; and a bill laying an embargo was passed on the 22d of December, 1807, at eleven o'clock at night, by a vote of 82 to 44. A similar bill had passed the senate on the very day the subject was introduced, by a vote of 22 to 6. According to this bill, all American vessels were prohibited from sailing for foreign ports; all foreign vessels from taking out cargoes; and all coasting vessels were required to give bond to land their cargoes in the United States.

The embargo was violently opposed by the federal party and their few democratic associates in Congress. It was also extremely unpopular among a large portion of the people, particularly in the states most interested in commerce and navigation.

The federalists throughout the United states, denounced the restrictive measures of the administration, but the democratic party generally approved of and sustained them. There were, however, some exceptions even among that party; and in the city of New York a public meeting was held, soon after the passage of the embargo act by Congress, at which De Witt Clinton, then a leading democrat in the state of New York, presided; and at this meeting resolutions were adopted disapproving of the embargo. The American Citizen, a democratic paper published in that city by James Cheetham, came out decidedly against the measure. Mr. Clinton shortly afterward renounced his opposition, and sustained this and other measures of Mr. Jefferson's administration.

Those who opposed the embargo policy believed it would prove unavailing in its influence to induce the British ministry to adjust existing disputes with the United States; another objection to the embargo was, that the act contained no provision for limiting it to a definite period. An embargo had been laid by the continental Congress early in the war of the revolution, and again in 1794, during the administration of Washington; but these were limited to thirty or sixty days. The act of 1807 was unlimited as to the term of its operation, and it could not be repealed by a majority vote of Congress, as the act of repeal would be subject to the president's veto, after which a two-third vote would be necessary in Congress. If it were intended as a measure of annoyance and injury to a foreign nation, it was putting it in the power of the president to make war; and if it were designed chiefly as a means of safety, it was said, the merchants were the best judges as to the risks and the dangers. And there was reason to believe that the measure had been recommended and adopted at the secret instance of the French emperor, who sought to destroy the commerce of Great Britain; and who insisted on the co-operation of the United States, directly or indirectly, in his plans to subjugate his enemy. The letters of the American envoys in Paris, afterward published, stated various conversations and facts which showed that the emperor expected an embargo would be laid by the American government, and that it would meet his approbation. Napoleon had said that there should be no neutrals; that the United States should be decided friends, or he must treat them as enemies. And he predicted in October that an embargo would be laid in America, which was done in December following. Mr. Jefferson used the following language in a confidential letter to the American minister in Paris, in October, 1808: "Bonaparte does not wish us to go to war with England; knowing we have not ships sufficient to carry on such a war. And to submit to pay England the tribute on our commerce, which she demands by her orders in council, would be to aid her in the war against France, and would give the emperor just ground to declare war on us."

Notwithstanding the difficulties in which American commerce was involved by the conduct of both England and France, it was the opinion of men entitled to respect and confidence for their good judgment, that negotiations conducted in a proper spirit would have prevented the difficulties and evils which occurred to the United States; and that more decision and firmness would have prevented war and preserved commercial prosperity. In France, the American envoys expressed surprise that some resentment was not manifested against the French government by that of the United States. And the American ministers in England expressly declared, that a treaty might have been made with that government which, if not in all respects such as was desired, might have been accepted withwithout injury or dishonor to the United States.*

The embargo question, and subjects connected with it, occupied much of the time of this session of Congress, which closed on the 25th of April, 1808. The president, on the 2d of February, communicated to Congress the British orders in council of the 11th of November, and on the 17th of March he sent to that body the Milan decree of Napoleon. Spain issued similar decrees soon after the latter.

The committee of Congress to whom these and other documents were referred, made a report on the 16th of April, recommending for the present a continuance of the embargo, but that the president have power to suspend it until the next session of Congress. A law was therefore passed authorizing the executive to suspend the embargo act in the event of a peace in Europe, or of favorable changes in the measures of the belligerents affecting neutral commerce.

Some measures of defence were adopted by Congress; such as the erection and repair of fortifications on the seacoast, and for building and manning a large number of gunboats; for raising eight additional regiments of troops; for detaching one hundred thousand of the militia for service, if required, and for arming the whole body of the militia in the United States.

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* Bradford.

While Congress was in session, Mr. Rose, a special minister from England, arrived at Norfolk for the avowed purpose of adjusting the affair of the frigate Chesapeake. On arriving at Washington he opened a correspondence with Mr. Madison, secretary of state, but as the British envoy required, in conformity to his instructions, that the president's proclamation interdicting British vessels-of-war from the harbors of the United States, should be withdrawn before entering on the subject of reparation —and this being refused by our government, the negotiation was broken off. Mr. Rose, therefore, embarked for England about the last of March, in the same frigate which brought him out.

This correspondence created a new theme for discussion between the two political parties of the nation; the federalists thought the administration wrong in not revoking the proclamation, while the democrats justified the president and secretary of state in the course adopted. The federalists also asserted that Mr. Jefferson was indulging his ancient animosity against England, and furthering the views of France, and that the embargo was recommended to the party in power chiefly by its operating more injuriously on England than on her enemies.

The operation of the embargo law, although the measure was sustained by a majority of the American people, was the occasion of great distress, particularly among the commercial community, throughout the United States, and put the patriotism and firmness of all to a severe test. Dependent as we were on foreign markets for the sale of our redundant products, now that we were not permitted to export them, they fell to half their wonted price, and even less. To many of the producers they did not repay the cost of production. The supply of foreign merchandise, too, which habit had made necessary, and of which there was no domestic supply, or an insufficient one, being cut off, its price rose proportionally high, and thus the expenses of the agricultural classes increased in the same proportion that their means of defraying them diminished. It bore still harder on the sailors and ship-owners, who were thrown entirely out of employment—and here the pressure was most severely felt in the states that were most addicted to navigation. It is true it operated as a bounty on manufactures, by making them scarcer and dearer, but this at first benefited but a small proportion of the community.

The embargo was also severely felt by the belligerents, and especially by England. The United States were the most extensive and profitable of all the customers of Great Britain, and the loss of our trade must be grievously felt by her manufacturers. Thus it was a trial between the two nations, England and the United States, who could suffer longest. In this contest, however, we lay under a disadvantage; for, in the first place, we deprived Great Britain of the trade of only one nation, while we deprived ourselves of the trade of all; and in the next, our adversaries could procure cotton from Brazil, Egypt, and the East Indies, tobacco from South

America, naval stores from Sweden, lumber from Nova Scotia, and grain from the Baltic, though at a greater cost; but we, exporting nothing, were unable to import the woollens, linens, silks, hardware, and pottery, to which we were accustomed and which we had not yet learned to make.*

Another disadvantage (noticed by the same writer) attending this policy, was the change of trade from the United States, by being forced into new channels. Thus it was long after the peace before the West Indies furnished as extensive a market for American products as before the embargo. Whatever were the hazards of capture, from the edicts of the belligerents, they could be fairly estimated by the merchants, and to prohibit them from employing their capital in this way was to withhold from them a profit within their reach, and was an injury, not only to them, but to the whole class of their customers, whether producers or consumers. It was further injurious in increasing the profits of illicit trade, and, consequently, the temptations to engage in violations of the embargo law, and smuggling, to the injury of patriotic merchants and the benefit of those who disregarded the laws.

The violent opposition to this measure of the administration, gradually weakened the democratic party and strengthened the federalists, particularly in the middle and eastern states. Still the administration were enabled to sustain themselves with a majority of the people. In reference to the operation of the embargo, Mr. Jefferson remarks, in a letter to Doctor Leib on the 23d of June, 1808: "The federalists are now playing a game of the most mischievous tendency, without, perhaps, being themselves aware of it. They are endeavoring to convince England that we suffer more by the embargo than they do, and that, if they will but hold out awhile, we must abandon it. It is true, the time will come when we must abandon it. But if this is before the repeal of the orders in council, we must abandon it only for a state of war. The day is not distant when that will be preferable to a longer continuance of the embargo. But we can never remove that, and let our vessels go out and be taken under these orders, without making reprisal. I think that in two or three months we shall know what will be the issue."

While the nation was greatly agitated by the condition of the country, in view of the critical state of our foreign relations, the presidential election came on. There was some division among the democrats in Virginia with regard to a successor of Mr. Jefferson, as president of the United States. It had been understood generally by the party that Mr. Madison would be selected, but Mr. Monroe's claims were strongly pressed by his personal friends, among whom was John Randolph. On the 23d of January, 1808, soon after Mr. Monroe's return from England, the friends of each candidate tried their strength at a caucus of the members of the legislature of Virginia, when 134 declared in favor of Mr. Madison, and 47 for Mr. Monroe. A caucus of the democratic members of Congress was held at Washington on the same night, when Mr. Madison received 83 votes, Mr. Monroe 3, and George Clinton 3. Mr. Madison was therefore nominated for president; at the same time, George Clinton was nominated for re-election as vice-president.

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* Tucker.

When the election came on, James Madison received 122 electoral votes for president, and George Clinton 113 votes for vice-president. The federal candidates, Charles C. Pinckney for president, and Rufus King for vice-president, received each 47 votes. Of the democratic votes, 6 were given to George Clinton for president; and for vice-president, 9 were given to John Langdon, 3 to James Madison, and 3 to James Monroe. The states which supported the federal candidates were New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Delaware; also two districts in Maryland, and three in North Carolina.

General Armstrong, the American minister at Paris, in 1808, in pursuance of his instructions, remonstrated with M. Champagny, the French minister of foreign relations, against the condemnations of American vessels and cargoes under the Berlin and Milan decrees, which he showed to be clear infractions of the treaty of 1800. To the several remonstrances made by the American minister against the captures and burning of American property, no answer was given by the French government.

Mr. Madison, secretary of state, wrote to General Armstrong on the 29th of May, 1808, to inform him of the power given to the president to suspend the embargo, and requested him to inform the French government that the effect of revoking her decrees would be to compel Great Britain to follow her example, or to be at war with the United States; and on the other hand, should Great Britain revoke her orders in council, France could not persist in her decrees without forcing a contest with the United States.

Thus, instead of a suspension of the embargo, as to France, on repealing her decrees, it was supposed that a sufficient inducement might be presented in other considerations. War with Great Britain was, in short, indicated as the consequence of such repeal. This offer was unnoticed by the French minister.

Mr. Pinkney, the American minister in London, in writing to Mr. Canning, the British minister, as instructed, stated explicitly, that on Great Britain rescinding her orders in relation to the United States, they would open their trade with her, and keep it shut to her enemy, if he failed also to rescind his decrees. This offer was unhesitatingly rejected. Mr. Canning, in reply to Mr. Pinkney, in September, 1808, said, that as the application made to the French government by the United States had not met with a favorable reception, his majesty (the king of England) could not change his course. That he saw nothing in the embargo to induce the change. If it were regarded as a measure of hostility, it was manifestly unjust toward him. The redress should be first made by the party originating the wrong. He professes every disposition to be on amicable terms with the United States ; says the depression of other countries is not desired by his nation ; that the prosperity of America is essentially that of Great Britain, and her strength and power are not for herself, but for the world. That when a readjustment of the present differences should take place, both nations would better appreciate the value of each other's friendship.

The correspondence between Mr. Pinkney and Mr. Canning, extending through a series of letters, was unsatisfactory, and led to no result. The letters of the British minister are more remarkable for a display of wit and sarcasm, than for those qualities which might be expected to distinguish a practical statesman of the admitted talents of Mr. Canning.

On the 7th of November, 1808, Congress assembled, at the time appointed at the last session, and on the 8th Mr. Jefferson sent to both houses his last annual message.

The subject of the foreign relations was, on the 11th of November, referred to a committee of the house of representatives, who, on the 22d, made a report, concluding with three resolutions submitted for the consideration of the house: 1st. That the United States could not, without a sacrifice of their rights, honor, and independence, submit to the late edicts of Great Britain and France. 2d. That it was expedient to prohibit the admission of either the ships or merchandise of those belligerents into the ports of the United States. 3d. That the country ought to be immediately placed in a state of defence.

After a protracted debate, the first two resolutions were passed, by three fourths of the votes, and the last unanimously.

A similar debate on the same subject, in the senate, was introduced by a motion to repeal the embargo law. The motion was supported by its mover, Mr. Hillhouse, of Connecticut, and by Messrs. Pickering and Lloyd, of Massachusetts, and White, of Delaware. It was opposed by Messrs. Pope, of Kentucky, Smith, of Maryland, Crawford, of Georgia, and Moore and Giles, of Virginia. The question on the resolution was taken on the 2d of December, when it appeared that there were but six votes in its favor, to twenty-five against it.

In pursuance of the third resolution adopted by the house, the sum of four hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars was appropriated to fortifications, principally at New York ; four frigates were ordered to be equipped in addition to the naval force already in service ; three thousand six hundred seamen to be enlisted, in addition to those already in service, and an addition was made to the marine corps.

While the report which earnestly urged the impolicy of repealing the embargo act was adopted by so large a majority, the greater part even of the friends of the administration had no expectation that it would be continued many months longer. Some thought it ought to be repealed in the spring, but none were desirous of extending it further than the 1st of September. Looking forward to the change of policy, various expedients connected with the repeal were proposed, but neither of these propositions according with the views of a large majority, they were all postponed on the 10th of February, by 65 votes to 55.*

In the meanwhile the embargo was pressing with increasing severity on every class of the community, whether producers or consumers, and this pressure drove the people of New England, where the embargo was most felt, to a point of disaffection which had never before been witnessed in the United States. Many, therefore, entertained strong hopes that some course would be taken during the present session, by which the industry and enterprise of the country might be again put into activity, its vessels be once more suffered to venture on the ocean, and perhaps be permitted to arm in their own defence, if not to make reprisals. Among the many objections to the embargo, there was one which operated strongly on its friends, and that was the frequency with which it was violated. There were also many cases in which the law was clandestinely evaded. The majority of Congress who were willing to try it longer, rather than resort to war, passed a law during this session, which armed the executive with new powers for enforcing it.

The administration and the majority who supported it were, before Congress rose, turned from the purpose of trying the embargo a few months longer, from fear of the growing disaffection of the New England states

It has appeared by subsequent disclosures, that in the month of February, Mr. John Quincy Adams, who had supported the administration in the embargo and other measures of policy, ever since the affair of the Chesapeake, and who, finding his course was not approved by the legislature of Massachusetts, had resigned his seat in the senate of the United States, made to the president a communication to the following effect, namely: that from information received by him, and which might be relied on, it was the determination of the ruling party in Massachusetts, and even New England (federalists), if the embargo was persisted in, no longer to submit to it, but to separate themselves from the Union; at least until the existing obstacles to commerce were removed; that the plan was already digested, and that such was the pressure of the embargo on the community, that they would be supported by the people.

The danger thus threatening the Union was deemed paramount to all other considerations, and the president, with his cabinet, concluded that it would be better, to modify their interdiction of commerce in such a way that, while employment was afforded to American vessels, Great Britain and France should still feel the loss of American commerce. Congress accordingly passed a law for repealing the embargo after the 15th of March, as to all nations except France and Great Britain, and interdicting with them all commercial intercourse whatever, whether by exporting or importing, either directly or circuitously. This measure has always since gone under the name of the *non-intercourse law*. It passed the house of representatives on the 27th of February, by 81 votes to 40, and became a law on the 1st of March, 1809. The repeal of the embargo took effect on the 15th of the same month.

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* Tucker.

It is not known whether the information thus communicated by Mr. Adams was entirely accurate,* but that the growing discontents of the country made some change expedient, would seem to be very reasonable. In most of the state legislatures of New England there was a systematic purpose to defeat the measures of the general government, especially in preventing the execution of the law last enacted for enforcing the embargo. In Connecticut a law was passed to prevent those searches in private houses, which the act of Congress authorized under particular circumstances.*

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* The following statement was authorized by Mr. Adams, and published in the National Intelligencer of October 21, 1828, and republished in Niles's Register, vol. xxxv., p. 136 :—

"At the session of Congress which commenced in November, 1808, Mr. Adams was a private citizen, residing at Boston. The embargo was still in force, operating with extreme pressure upon the interests of the people, and was viewed as a most effective instrument by the party prevailing in the state against the administration of Mr. Jefferson. The people were constantly instigated to forcible resistance against it, and juries after juries acquitted the violators of it, upon the ground that it was unconstitutional, assumed in the face of a solemn decision of the district court of the United States. A separation of the Union was openly stimulated in the public prints, and a convention of delegates of the New England states, to meet at New Haven, was intended and proposed.

"Mr. Giles, and several other members of Congress, during this session, wrote to Mr. Adams confidential letters, informing him of the various measures proposed as reinforcements or substitutes for the embargo, and soliciting his opinions upon the subject. He answered these letters with frankness, and in confidence. He earnestly recommended the substitution of the non-intercourse for the embargo; and, in giving his reasons for this preference, was necessarily led to enlarge upon the views and purposes of certain leaders of the party which had the management of the state legislature in their hands. He urged that a continuance of the embargo much longer would certainly be met by forcible resistance, supported by the legislature, and probably by the judiciary of the state. That to quell that resistance, if force should be resorted to by the government, it would produce a civil war; and that in that event, he had no doubt the leaders of the party would secure the co-operation with them of Great Britain. That their object was, and had been for several years, a dissolution of the Union, and the establishment of a separate confederation, he knew from unequivocal evidence, although not proveable in a court of law; and that, in the case of a civil war, the aid of Great Britain to effect that purpose would be as surely resorted to, as it would be indispensably necessary to the design. That these letters to Mr. Giles were by him communicated to Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Adams believes. He believes, likewise, that other letters from him to other members of Congress, written during the same session and upon the same subject, were also communicated to him. In one of the letters to Mr. Giles he repeated an assurance which he had verbally given him during the preceding session of Congress, that he had for his support of Mr. Jefferson's administration no personal or interested motive, and no favor to ask of him whatever."

On being called upon in November, 1828, by Hon. Harrison Gray Otis, William Prescott, William Sullivan, and other leading federalists of Massachusetts, to furnish his proofs relative to the charges made by him of a design by the leaders of the federal party in Massachusetts to effect a dissolution of the Union in 1808, Mr. Adams declined to do so at that time, but intimated that at some future day a sense of duty might require him to disclose the evidence which he possessed on the subject. The correspondence was published in Niles's Register, vol. xxxv. In their letter to Mr. Adams, Messrs. Otis and others declare, that "they have never known nor suspected the party which prevailed in Massachusetts in 1808, or any other party in this state, ever entertained the design to produce a dissolution of the Union, or the establishment of a separate confederation."

The administration of Mr. Jefferson terminated on the 3d of March, 1809. He received addresses from the legislatures of the states of Vermont, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Georgia, and from the senate of New York, and the house of delegates of Virginia, to serve a third term, but he chose to decline being again a candidate, offering as a reason a desire to conform to the precedent made by General Washington. In his correspondence with his friends at the time, he expressed his gratification at being enabled to retire to private life. After waiting to witness the inauguration of his successor, he left the seat of government for his favorite seat of Monticello.

At the period when Mr. Jefferson resigned the reins of government into the hands of his chosen friend, Mr. Madison, the country was involved in gloom and despondency. A report of a committee of the legislature of Massachusetts, in January, 1809, drew the following picture of the state of the country at that time :—

"Our agriculture is discouraged. The fisheries abandoned. Navigation forbidden. Our commerce at home restrained, if not annihilated. Our commerce abroad cut off. Our navy sold, dismantled, or degraded to the service of cutters or gunboats. The revenue extinguished. The course of justice interrupted. And the nation weakened by internal animosities and divisions, at the moment when it is unnecessarily and improvidently exposed to war with Great Britain, France, and Spain."

Such were the views of the opponents of Mr. Jefferson's administration, when it was about to close. The principal benefits accomplished by him and his cabinet, during the eight years while the power of the government was in their hands, as claimed by the friends of Mr. Jefferson, were, first, the acquisition of Louisiana, by which more than a million of square miles were added to the national domain, and the free navigation of the Mississippi secured ; which also settled a troublesome and threatening controversy with Spain, and removed the powerful and dangerous neighborhood of France ; second, the surveys of the coast and the exploring expedition of Lewis and Clarke, which added greatly to the geographical knowledge of the country ; third, the administration had done much to advance the Indians in the arts of civilized life, and had obtained their voluntary relinquishment of their title to ninety-six millions of acres ; it had also the merit of compelling the Barbary powers to respect the flag of the United States.

It is also claimed for Mr. Jefferson, by his friends, as stated by his biographer, Professor Tucker, that he gave a practical illustration of the great political maxims from which our civil institutions take their shape and derive their force; that government was instituted for the benefit of the governed, and, consequently, that its power is not a property in those who administer it, but a *trust* for the public good; that as power is grateful in itself, and its exercise always more or less conflicts with the interests or wishes of others, it should be as sparingly delegated and as forbearingly exerted as is consistent with the great purposes of peace and security.

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* Tucker.

In conformity with these maxims (the same writer remarks), Mr. Jefferson made no attempt, and exhibited no desire to enlarge the powers of the executive, and never exercised them for the benefit of himself or of his family.

The biographer of Mr. Jefferson has not thought proper to define, in the partialities of his friendship, the improvements, if any, which that president introduced, in administering the government, on the system and views of General Washington, nor has he stated in what respects the administration of Washington, and his constructions of the constitution of which he was one of the framers, was not a safe model for his successors. A recent impartial writer, in drawing a parallel between Washington and Jefferson, remarks as follows. It is from a sketch of the life of Thomas Jefferson, published in Philadelphia, by J. G. Russell, 1844:—

"The superiority of Washington's statesmanship seems to be shown in the peculiar adaptation of his policy to the special object of the federal constitution, which was the vigor and efficiency of the government, in contradistinction to the laxity of principle and looseness of the parts in the old confederacy. Let us suppose that Mr. Jefferson had been chosen to carry into practice the first experiment of the government, instead of Washington, and that he had applied his system of *state-rights* and *popular interference* to the new machine which the federal convention had just placed in the hands of the executive. Is it not self-evident that, for want of vigor and energy, the constitution would have crumbled to pieces in his hands, and left him in possession only of the fragments of the old confederacy? For that is certainly the true system of the government which fulfils its great ends; and that, of course, must be the spurious doctrine which baffles and defeats the object had in view by those who framed it. The difference in the crisis, and the remote stages of the two administrations can not affect this principle. A government of laws must have the principle of energy and coercion; and it was the concentration of this energy in a federal government which the convention gave, and which, to carry out into perfection, induced the Washington policy. It does appear, therefore, that Mr. Jefferson's was anomalous and not congenial to the constitution, but a policy formed in accordance with the constant and living current of popular opinion; a policy for the people, not for the constitution; a policy framed to gain popularity, not to cement, fulfil, or consummate the fabric and purposes of the government. It appears, therefore, to be rather the policy of the politician than the policy of the statesman, the legislator, the lawgiver, or the patriot, who looks beyond the bounds of present praise to the final consequences of civilization and liberty. Yet even this anomalous policy of Mr. Jefferson, so far from being incompatible with human happiness and permanent freedom, is admirably calculated to secure those objects, provided the people are sufficiently virtuous to be governed by opinion instead of law. It implies, in the people, the highest perfection of virtue and intelligence, and, leaving nothing to coercion, places the safety of society at the mercy of their discretion, wisdom, prudence, and virtue. It implies that power will be so honest as to commit no usurpation, and that the people will be so virtuous as to abstain from all violence, licentiousness, and disorder! but this is supposing the very effect that government is intended to secure. We have many declarations under Mr. Jefferson's pen, which show that he had not considered the scientific principles of his system so profoundly as he had studied its impression on the minds of the people; and seeing it well received by them, he determined to adhere to it. So that in effect there was this difference in Washington and Jefferson, as statesmen—that the former rescued the republic from the chaos of the old confederation to the coercive government of the federal constitution, and the latter reconducted us to the chaos of the confederacy through the currents of popular opinion, ideas of unbounded liberty, implicit confidence in the virtues of the people, and an unlimited faith in their intelligence, and capacity for self-government"

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JAMES MADISON.

James Madison, the fourth president of the United States, was born in Orange county, Virginia, on the 16th of March, 1751. His father was James Madison, the family being of Welsh descent, and among the early emigrants to Virginia. The subject of the present sketch studied the English, Latin, Greek, French, and Italian languages, and was fitted for college under the tuition of Mr. Robertson, a native of Scotland, and the Rev. Mr. Martin, a Jerseyman. He graduated at Princeton, New Jersey, in 1771 ; and afterward remained a year at college, pursuing his studies under the superintendence of Doctor Witherspoon, president of the institution. His constitution was impaired by close application to his studies, and his health was, for many years, feeble. Returning to Virginia, he commenced the practice of the law, but the scenes of the revolution left but little opportunity for the quiet pursuits of private life, and his talents being soon appreciated by his neighbors, he was called into the public service at an early age. In 1776 he was elected a member of the general assembly of Virginia, and in 1778 he was appointed one of the executive councillors. In the winter of 1779–'80 he was chosen a delegate to the continental Congress, of which body he continued an active and prominent member till 1784. In January, 1786, the legislature of Virginia appointed Mr. Madison one of their delegates to a convention of commissioners, or delegates, from the several states, to meet at Annapolis, Maryland, the ensuing September, to devise a uniform system of commercial regulations which should be binding on the whole confederacy, when ratified by all the states. Only five states were represented in this convention, but the members present took a step which led to important results. They recommended a convention of delegates from all the states, to be held at Philadelphia, in May, 1787, to take into consideration the situation of the United States, to devise such further provisions as should appear to them necessary to render the constitution of the federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union. Of that convention, which framed the constitution of the United States, Mr. Madison was one of the most distinguished members. He took a leading part in the debates on the various plans of a constitution submitted to the convention, and to his efforts in maturing the constitution as finally adopted, the country is greatly indebted. He took notes of the proceedings and debates of the convention, which, since his death, have been published, forming a valuable text-book for American statesmen.

In the convention, Mr. Madison generally coincided with General Washington and other members in their views in favor of a strong national government. A paper in the handwriting of General Washington, and found among the documents left by him, contains a summary of Mr. Madison's opinions on the subject of a form of constitution to be proposed. It is the substance of a letter received by Washington from Mr. Madison, a short time previous to the assembling of the convention at Philadelphia, and has been published in the North American Review, volume xxxv., as follows:—

"Mr. Madison thinks an individual independence of the states utterly irreconcilable with their aggregate sovereignty, and that a consolidation of the whole into one simple republic would be as inexpedient as it is unattainable. He therefore proposes a middle ground, which may at once support a due supremacy of the national authority, and not exclude the local authorities whenever they can be subordinately useful.

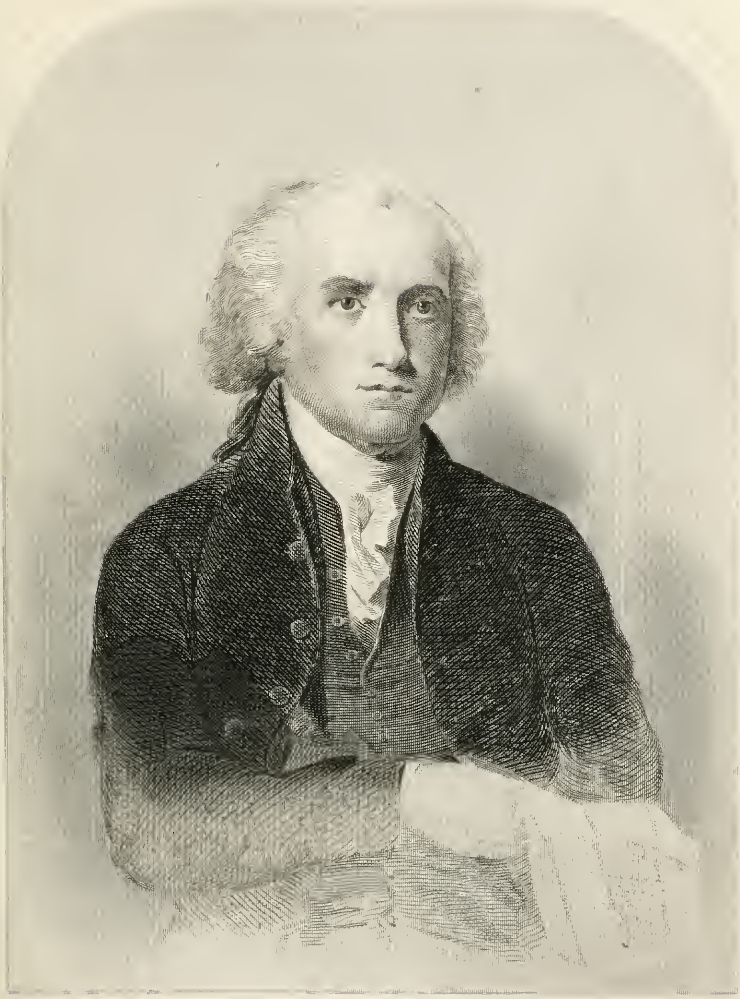
"As the groundwork, he proposes that a change be made in the principle of representation, and thinks there would be no great difficulty in effecting it.

"Next, that, in addition to the present federal powers, the national government should be armed with positive and complete authority in all cases which require uniformity; such as regulation of trade, including the right of taxing both exports and imports, the fixing the terms and forms of naturalization, &c.

"Over and above this positive power, a negative *in all cases* whatever on the legislative acts of the states, as heretofore exercised by the kingly prerogative, appears to him absolutely necessary, and to be the least possible encroachment on the state jurisdictions. Without this defensive power he conceives that every positive law which can be given on paper, will be evaded.

"This control over the laws would prevent the internal vicissitudes of state policy, and the aggressions of interested majorities.

"The national supremacy ought also to be extended, he thinks, to the judiciary departments; the oaths of the judges should at least include a fidelity to the general as well as local constitution; and that an appeal should be to some national tribunals in all cases to which foreigners or in-



James Madison

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habitants of other states may be parties. The admiralty jurisdictions to fall entirely within the purview of the national government.

"The national supremacy in the executive departments is liable to some difficulty, unless the officers administering them could be made appointable by the supreme government. The militia ought entirely to be placed, in some form or other, under the authority which is intrusted with the general protection and defence.

"A government composed of such extensive powers should be well organized and balanced.

"The legislative department might be divided into two branches, one of them chosen every — years, by the people at large, or by the legislatures; the other to consist of fewer members, to hold their places for a longer term, and to go out in such rotation as always to leave in office a large majority of old members.

"Perhaps the negative on the laws might be most conveniently exercised by this branch.

"As a further check, a council of revision, including the great ministerial officers, might be superadded.

"A national executive must also be provided. He has scarcely ventured as yet to form his own opinion, either of the manner in which it ought to be constituted, or of the authorities with which it ought to be clothed.

"An article should be inserted, expressly guarantying the tranquillity of the states against internal as well as external dangers.

"In like manner, the right of coercion should be expressly declared. With the resources of commerce in hand, the national administration might always find means of exerting it either by sea or land; but the difficulty and awkwardness of operating by force on the collective will of a state, render it particularly desirable that the necessity of it might be precluded. Perhaps the negative on the laws might create such a mutual dependence between the general and particular authorities as to answer; or perhaps some defined objects of taxation might be submitted along with commerce, to the general authority.

"To give a new system its proper validity and energy, a ratification must be obtained from the people, and not merely from the ordinary authority of the legislature. This will be the more essential, as inroads on the existing constitutions of the states will be unavoidable."

The foregoing views of Mr. Madison, expressed by him before the constitution was formed, are highly interesting, as evincing a remarkable degree of foresight and political wisdom, and forming the basis of the principal features of the constitution as finally adopted by the convention.

The constitution having passed the ordeal of the national convention, in September, 1787, was next, by the recommendation of that body, submitted to conventions elected by the people of the several states, for their consideration. Mr. Madison was elected a member of the convention of Virginia, chosen for that purpose, and here his best efforts were again called into requisition, to secure the sanction of his native state to a measure which he deemed of the most vital importance to the interests of the whole Union. In this state convention of Virginia were assembled some of the most able and talented of her sons, including many of the patriots of the revolution, and others renowned for wisdom and eloquence; but with widely discordant views on the subject of a form of national government. Among those who acted with Mr. Madison in advocating the adoption of the constitution, were John Marshall, Edmund Pendleton, George Wythe, and Edmund Randolph; while Patrick Henry, James Monroe, William Grayson, and George Mason, were among the opponents. The question was finally carried in favor of adoption by 89 votes to 79.

Notwithstanding the triumph of the federalists, as the friends of the constitution were then called, in the convention of Virginia, the anti-federalists held the majority in the legislature. An attempt to elect Mr. Madison to the senate of the United States was, therefore, unsuccessful, Messrs. Grayson and R. H. Lee being preferred. Mr. Madison was, however, elected by the people of one of the congressional districts, a member of the house of representatives, and took his seat in the new Congress, at New York, in April, 1789. In that body he bore an active and leading part in the adoption of measures for the organization of the government. He continued a distinguished member of Congress during the eight years of General Washington's administration, which terminated in March, 1797. He opposed the funding system, the national bank, and other measures of the administration which originated with Hamilton, secretary of the treasury; acting generally with the anti-federalists, who sustained the views of Mr. Jefferson, then secretary of state; notwithstanding Madison had been one of the most distinguished champions of the constitution previous to its adoption, and was associated with Hamilton and Jay in the production of the celebrated essays called "The Federalist," which had an important influence with the people, in favor of the constitution.

In 1794, being then in his forty-third year, Mr. Madison married Mrs Dolly Paine Todd, of Philadelphia, the widow of a lawyer of Pennsylvania, who died in less than three years after her first marriage. This lady's maiden name was Paine; and her father, who belonged to the society of Friends, had removed from Virginia to Philadelphia. She was about twenty years younger than Mr. Madison, and still survives. She was always admired for her agreeable manners, her fine person, and talents in conversation. With an amiable disposition, a mild and dignified deportment, few American ladies have been more distinguished than Mrs. Madison, in the various and high stations sho has been called to occupy and adorn through life.

In January, 1794, Mr. Madison introduced into the house of representatives a series of resolutions on the subject of the commerce of the United States with foreign nations. They were based on a previous report made to Congress by Mr. Jefferson, secretary of state, on the subject of foreign relations, and were probably prepared with the concurrence of Mr. Jefferson, as a manuscript copy was found among his papers. They were retaliatory in their character toward Great Britain, and considered favorable to the interests of France. They gave rise to a warm debate, parties being nearly balanced in the house, but the subject was finally postponed, without definite action.

Mr. Madison continued to act with the democratic, or republican party, for the remainder of his political career, co-operating with Mr. Jefferson in his views of national policy, and between these two gentlemen there existed through their lives the warmest personal friendship. In 1797, Mr. Madison retired from Congress, and in order to oppose the administration of Mr. Adams in a new form, he accepted a seat in the Virginia legislature, in 1798, where he made a report on the subject of the alien and sedition laws which had been passed by the federal party in Congress, concluding with a series of resolutions against those laws; which resolutions have since formed a text for the doctrine of state-rights, as held by the democratic party of Virginia and some other states.

On the accession of Mr. Jefferson to the presidency, in 1801, he appointed Mr. Madison secretary of state, which office he held during the eight years of Mr. Jefferson's administration; and in 1809, having received the nomination and support of the democratic party, he succeeded his friend and coadjutor, as president of the United States. During his administration, in 1812, war was declared by Congress against Great Britain, to which measure he reluctantly consented, and the same year he was re-elected to the presidency. In his selection of commissioners to negotiate a treaty of peace, Mr. Madison showed his anxiety for a termination of the war, by the appointment of able men, sincerely desirous of peace, which was concluded at Ghent, in December, 1814.

The anxious and exciting scenes of war were not congenial to a person of the peaceful disposition of Mr. Madison, yet the duties of his high office were performed with firmness and ability. Among the events of the war which were calculated to disturb his equanimity, was the capture of the city of Washington, and the destruction of the public buildings, by the British, in 1814. The president and some other principal officers of the government narrowly escaped from being made prisoners by the British troops; they, however, were saved by a rapid flight.

After the return of peace, the remainder of Mr. Madison's administration was prosperous and tranquil. The interests of agriculture and commerce revived among the people, and the national revenue was rapidly replenished from the fruits of returning prosperity. The manufacturing interests, however, languished for want of adequate protection. The president was favorable to their encouragement. He changed his views on the subject of a national bank, and signed the bill for incorporating the bank of the United States, in 1816. He had, in 1791, opposed the bank then incorporated, as unconstitutional, and in 1815 he had returned to Congress a bill incorporating a bank, as he disapproved of some of its provisions; but in the following year he waived his objections, and approved of an act of incorporation, somewhat modified.

On the 3d of March, 1817, Mr. Madison's administration was brought to a close, and he retired from public life, being then sixty-six years of age, to his seat at Montpelier, in Orange county, Virginia, where he passed the remainder of his days. In 1829 he was chosen a member of the state convention to revise the constitution of Virginia, and for several years he acted as visiter and rector of the University of Virginia. He was also chosen president of an agricultural society in the county where he resided, and before this society he delivered an address, admirable for its classical beauty and practical knowledge.

Having arrived at a good old age, and numbered eighty-five years, the mortal career of Mr. Madison was closed on the 28th of June, 1836. Congress and other public bodies adopted testimonials of respect for his memory. He left no children.

In his personal appearance, Mr. Madison was of small stature, and rather protuberant in front. He had a calm expression, penetrating blue eyes, and was slow and grave in his speech. At the close of his presidency he seemed to be care-worn, with an appearance of more advanced age than was the fact. He was bald on the top of his head, wore his hair powdered, and generally dressed in black. His manner was modest and retiring, but in conversation he was pleasing and instructive, having a mind well stored with the treasures of learning, and being particularly familiar with the political world. On his accession to the presidency he restored the custom of levees at the presidential mansion, which had been abolished by Mr. Jefferson. It was on the occasion of these levees, that his accomplished lady, by her polite and attractive attentions and manners, shone with peculiar lustre. Mr. Madison was fond of society, although he had travelled but little; never having visited foreign countries, or seen much of the people and country over which he presided.

When a member of deliberative bodies, Mr. Madison was an able debater, having acquired self-confidence by slow degrees. As a writer, he has few equals among American statesmen, and the style of his public documents and his correspondence has always been much admired. He was at the time of his death, the last surviving signer of the constitution, and the part he bore in framing that instrument, his subsequent advocacy of it, by his writings, with his adherence to its provisions, obtained for him the title of "Father of the Constitution."

ADMINISTRATION OF MADISON.

On the fourth of March, 1809, James Madison was inaugurated as president of the United States. The oath of office was administered to him by Chief-Justice Marshall, in the capitol, at Washington in the presence of the ex-president, Mr. Jefferson, who sat at his right hand, the members of the late cabinet, many members of Congress, foreign ministers, and a large concourse of citizens. He was dressed in a plain suit of black, and delivered his inaugural address in a manner at once modest and dignified. The tone and sentiment of the address elicited general approbation, and hopes were entertained by the nation, that the gloomy aspect of affairs might be changed by the measures of the new administration with regard to our foreign relations. These anticipations of the people were doomed to disappointment.

Mr. Madison selected for his cabinet, Robert Smith, of Maryland, as secretary of state, William Eustis, of Massachusetts, secretary of war, Paul Hamilton, of South Carolina, secretary of the navy; Mr. Gallatin was continued as secretary of the treasury, as was Cesar A. Rodney, of Delaware, attorney-general.

The eleventh Congress met on the 22d of May, 1809, agreeably to a law passed by the previous Congress, in consequence of the critical state of the nation, and the apprehension of a war with Great Britain or France. The democratic ascendency in the house of representatives having been sustained at the recent elections, Joseph B. Varnum was re-elected speaker.

At this session, the non-intercourse act with Great Britain and France, which had been substituted for the embargo, by the last Congress, was continued, with some modifications. No very material alterations were made in the law, nor was any other very important measure adopted at this extra session, which lasted only about five weeks, and was terminated on the 28th of June.

Mr. Erskine, the British minister at Washington, considering the non-intercourse law as placing Great Britain and France on an equality, made a communication to the government of the United States, in April, informing it that he was authorized, by despatches received from his government, to make reparation for the Chesapeake affair; also that an envoy extraordinary would soon be sent to the United States to conclude a treaty on all questions between the two countries, and that the orders in council would be repealed as to the United States, on the president's renewing the intercourse between America and Great Britain. The president issued a proclamation to that effect, on the 19th of April, stating the withdrawal of the British orders on the 10th of June, when the commerce between the two countries would be renewed. But the British government refused to sanction the overture and arrangement made by their minister, who, they declared, had exceeded the authority of his instructions; and he admitted that he had done so, in a letter to his government, in which he says, that "nothing would have induced me to deviate, in any degree, from the orders I had received, but a thorough conviction that by so doing I should accomplish the object which his majesty had in view; when by too strictly adhering to the letter of my instructions, I might lose the opportunity of promoting essentially his majesty's interests and wishes."

The president thereupon issued a second proclamation, reciting the facts, and declaring the act of non-intercourse to be revived and in full effect. Mr. Erskine was soon after recalled, and another envoy appointed in his stead. This transaction caused great irritation in the public mind and hostility toward England, among the American people, and a declaration of war at this time with England, would probably have been popular.

Mr. Jackson, the British envoy who succeeded Mr. Erskine, arrived at Washington at the close of the year 1809. He was directed to state the reasons for a refusal by the British government to confirm the arrangement made Mr. Erskine, and was authorized to enter into negotiations for a commercial treaty. But far from displaying the mild and conciliatory spirit of his predecessor, he attempted to vindicate the honor of his own government by dealing in censures and criminations upon the government of the United States, in a style unusual in diplomatic correspondence. He insinuated that the president and secretary of state must have known that Mr. Erskine had deviated from his instructions, and transcended his powers; and after the secretary of state denied the charge, he repeated the insinuation, which was deemed highly improper and insulting to our government. The correspondence between Mr. Jackson and the secretary of state was continued in the same angry tone for several weeks, each party considering himself harshly treated, and the president finally directed the secretary of state to receive no further communication from the British envoy Mr. Jackson therefore left Washington, immediately on receiving notice to that effect, and took up his residence in New York. At the request of the president, communicated through the American minister in London Mr. Jackson was recalled, but without being censured, or the offer of any apology for his conduct. Nor did the British ministry think proper to send another envoy to the United States until some months had elapsed after the return of Mr. Jackson to England.

Mr. Pinkney, the American minister to Great Britain, was continued at that court, but his efforts at negotiating proved unavailing, and early in 1811 he was instructed to return home. The British government, the same year appointed Mr. Foster minister to the United States, who effected a settlement of the affair of the Chesapeake frigate in November, 1811, and remained at Washington until the declaration of war against Great Britain, in 1812.

Congress again assembled on the 27th of November, 1809, and continued in session until the 1st of May, 1810—but during this period of more than five months, few acts of general importance were passed; among them were several respecting the public lands; also laws respecting the postoffice establishment and postroads, the territories, lighthouses, compensation to ministers to foreign countries, consuls, &c.; providing for taking the census in 1810; for payment of a portion of the public debt, by creating a new loan, &c. The non-intercourse with Great Britain and France was continued by a new act, and a joint resolution was adopted in relation to the controversy between the executive and Francis James Jackson, the British envoy to the United States; the language of whose official letters to Mr. Smith, the secretary of state, was declared to be highly indecorous and insolent, the conduct of the executive toward him approved, and Congress solemnly pledged to stand by the executive government, in its refusal to receive any further communication from said Jackson, and to call into action the whole force of the nation, if it should become necessary, to repel such insults, and to assert and maintain the rights, the honor, and interests of the United States.

In the early part of the year 1810, the French *decree of Rambouillet* was made known, and alleged by the emperor Napoleon to have been issued in retaliation of the non-intercourse act of the United States. All American vessels which, since the 20th of March, 1808, had entered any French port, or the ports of any French colony, or of any country occupied by the French, or which should thereafter enter, were declared forfeit, and were to be sold for the benefit of the national treasury of France. In addition to the numerous condemnations under this decree, the French privateers committed various depredations on American commerce.

By the new non-intercourse act already referred to, which was passed by Congress in May, 1810, it was provided, that if either Great Britain or France would repeal her obnoxious orders or decrees, and the other nation did not, within three months thereafter, repeal hers, that then intercourse should be renewed with the nation repealing her acts, while toward the other belligerent, the provisions of the non-intercourse act should operate and be in force.

The French government were informed of the passage of this act, by General Armstrong, United States minister at Paris; and the French minister for foreign affairs, the duke of Cadore, immediately addressed a note to General Armstrong, dated August, 1810, stating that "the Berlin and Milan decrees, issued by the emperor, were revoked, and would cease to have effect after the first of November following." He added that "his government had adopted this measure because the Congress of the United States had *retraced* its steps, and had engaged to oppose the belligerent (Great Britain) which refused to acknowledge the rights of neutrals. It being understood (or on condition) that the English shall revoke their orders in council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they have wished to establish; or that the United States shall cause their rights to be respected by the English."

Although the language of the note of the duke of Cadore was somewhat equivocal and indefinite, it was received by our government in good faith, and the president issued his proclamation on the first of November, 1810, declaring that the French decrees were in fact revoked, and that the non-intercourse law would be revived and in force as to Great Britain, unless her orders in council should be revoked in three months after that date. Subsequent events served to prove that the emperor of France did not intend to revoke his decrees, in fact, unless Great Britain should also withdraw her orders affecting neutral commerce, or the United States should declare war against that nation. Indeed, after the first of November, American vessels and their cargoes were seized and held for sequestration; and several months later, in March, 1811, the French emperor declared, that "the decrees of Berlin and Milan were the fundamental laws of his empire." A new envoy from France, who arrived in the United States about this time, gave official notice to the administration that no remuneration would be made for the property sequestered.*

The president, in the meantime, urged on the British government a revocation of the orders in council, assuming that the French decrees were repealed. But the British government resisted the demand, on the ground that no sufficient evidence was furnished that the Berlin and Milan decrees had actually been repealed, and they insisted that the president's proclamation, and the subsequent law of Congress, passed in March, 1811, interdicting all commercial intercouse with England, were partial and unjust. Thus the unfriendly feelings between the United States and Great Britain were continued and increased. The British government was tenacious of the policy it had adopted relating to neutrals; and pleaded that its interests rendered it peculiarly necessary to be pursued at that time,

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* Bradford.

American vessels and their cargoes, therefore, continued to be seized by British cruisers, and condemned in their admiralty courts.

During the third session of the 11th Congress, from the 3d of December, 1810, to the 3d of March, 1811, the subject of our foreign relations attracted much attention. The president's course toward France, and his proclamation, were approved by Congress, and the non-intercourse act was revived against Great Britain. Certain parts of the former act had been repealed, so as to induce mercantile enterprise with Great Britain and dependencies, but now the goods imported from British dominions were made liable to seizure; and bonds were required of the importers, to await a legal decision. The prices of British goods in the United States were then so high as to induce the merchants to take the risk of bonding the goods for the full amount of their invoice value.

At the same session of Congress, the people of Louisiana were authorized to form a constitution and state government, preparatory to being admitted into the Union.

The charter of the bank of the United States, which institution was incorporated in 1791, expired, by limitation, on the 4th of March, 1811, and a bill having been introduced into Congress to renew the charter, was indefinitely postponed, in the house of representatives, on the 24th of January, 1811, by a vote of 65 to 64. In the senate, a similar bill was rejected by the casting vote of the vice-president, George Clinton, on the 5th of February, 1811—the senate being equally divided on the question, 17 to 17. The provisions of the bill were said to have been, in a great measure, conformable to the views of the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Gallatin.

Mr. Madison and his cabinet made further efforts to conciliate the favor, or to prevent the hostile measures, of the emperor of France. In February, 1811, Joel Barlow was appointed minister to France, with instructions and full powers to negotiate a treaty of commerce with that government. Mr. Barlow was received with favor by the ministers of Napoleon, and they intimated a desire to form a treaty with the United States. But the policy of the emperor was to exclude British manufactures from the continent of Europe; in accomplishing which, he believed, the commerce of the United States must be restricted, or be under his control. Nothing, therefore, was effected by Mr. Barlow, with regard to a settlement of our difficulties with France.

The course of the administration with regard to the belligerent powers, England and France, was much censured by the opposition party. A distinguished senator of that party, from Connecticut, remarked, that "the path for the administration to pursue was as plain as a turnpike—the two belligerent nations should have been treated with strict impartiality; an embargo laid for a short and limited period; permission to merchants to arm their vessels, and such measures of defence, both on the land and on the ocean, as the state of the country afforded, and as would, in a great measure prove efficient for the purposes of commercial protection; and the manifestation of a proper spirit to maintain the rights of the nation." The system of gunboats merely for the harbors and coasts of the United States, were declared by him, and in this opinion a great portion of the citizens of the Atlantic states agreed with him, to be but an apology for a proper naval force.

This protracted period of commercial interruptions and restrictions was attended, as might have been anticipated, by a great reduction in the trade and revenue of the United States. The exports were much reduced in 1808, 1809, and 1810; and the imports suffered corresponding depression; so that it became necessary to resort to loans to meet the demands on the public treasury.

The American minister, Mr. Barlow, long remained at the court of France; expostulating with its ministers, for unfriendly and injurious acts toward the United States; and importuning for justice, and for some proofs of really amicable intentions in favor of the American government. But no direct and satisfactory answer was given to these repeated applications of the American envoy. After several months of delay on the subject, the emperor was pleased to decree, that "so long as the British orders in council were unrepealed, and the principles of the treaty of Utrecht (1713) with respect to neutrals were in operation, his edicts of Berlin and Milan must remain in force, as to those nations which should suffer their flag to be *denationalized*." This was at once decisive as to the policy and views of the emperor, and as to the designed inoperativeness of the alleged repeal of those decrees, as stated and promised in August, 1810. And when the British government was urged a second time to withdraw their orders in council, on the plea, by the American minister, that the French edicts were repealed, they declared, that "whenever those edicts were absolutely and unconditionally repealed by an *authentic* act of the French government, *publicly promulgated*, their orders would be revoked."*

The congressional elections in 1810–'11, proved that the policy of Mr. Madison's administration was sustained by a large majority of the American people; the preponderance of the democratic party being kept up in both branches of Congress. The twelfth Congress assembled on the 4th of November, 1811, when Henry Clay, of Kentucky, an ardent supporter of the administration, was elected speaker of the house of representatives; it being the first time in which he had taken his seat in that body. He had previously been a member of the United States senate, at two short sessions, when he had acquired considerable reputation as a ready and eloquent debater, and exhibited some of those traits of character which have since distinguished him in the annals of the country, as a statesman.

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* Bradford.

The presence of Mr. Clay as speaker, and of Messrs. Calhoun, Cheves, and Lowndes, of South Carolina, with other active and spirited members of the house of representatives, aided by William H. Crawford, of Georgia, and a few others in the senate, infused new vigor into the ranks of the supporters of the administration. It was soon determined that inactivity and indecision should no longer be the policy of the democratic party. For several years, including the latter part of Jefferson's administration, war with England had been contemplated by the executive government of the United States, as a probable event; but we have already seen Mr. Jefferson carefully avoided war measures, and Mr. Madison endeavored to pursue a similar course. The non-intercourse laws and other restrictive measures, it was perceived, were becoming unpopular with the people, a great portion of whom were desirous that this policy should be changed. It was believed by the new leaders of the democratic party in Congress, that efficient measures were now demanded by the people, and that a war with Great Britain would be popular, particularly with the party which sustained the administration.

The first efforts of the members of Congress favorable to a declaration of war with Great Britain, were directed to measures preparatory to the expected contest with that powerful nation. The effects of the policy which had been pursued by Mr. Jefferson, in reducing the army and navy, were now severely felt. For several years preceding this period, the military peace establishment had stood at only about 3,000 men, and the navy consisted at this time of only twenty vessels—ten frigates, and ten sloops-of-war and smaller vessels. The gunboats which had been built in different parts of the United States, about one hundred and fifty in number, were only calculated for harbor defence.

The policy of the administration respecting a standing army and a navy, was now changed, principally through the advice and influence of Mr. Clay, Mr. Calhoun, and Mr. Lowndes, notwithstanding they met with opposition from many of their democratic associates. Bills were passed for augmenting the army, by providing for the enlistment of twenty thousand men; also authorizing the president of the United States to accept of the services of volunteers to the number of fifty thousand men; and providing for the more complete organization of the army; authorizing the president to cause the frigates in ordinary to be repaired, equipped, and put into actual service; and appropriations were made for the purchase of timber and other materials for building additional frigates. The president was also authorized to require of the executives of the several states and territories, the organizing, arming, and equipment of their respective proportions of one hundred thousand militia, and to hold them in readiness to march at a moment's warning; and one million of dollars was appropriated toward defraying the expense of carrying the act into effect.

President Madison was, with much difficulty, brought to acquiesce in warlike measures of a decisive character. He still hoped that war might be avoided, either by negotiation, or a continuance of restrictive measures on commerce with Great Britain. But he was soon made to understand that a more decided and energetic action on the part of the national government, was determined on, by the ardent democrats whose influence now predominated in Congress. The first presidential term of Mr. Madison was drawing to a close, and the nomination of candidates for president and vice-president, to be supported by the democratic party at the approaching election, was to be made, by a caucus of members of the Congress then in session. The leading republicans of the state of New York who were dissatisfied with Mr. Madison's course, had it then in contemplation to nominate for the presidency, De Witt Clinton, who was then lieutenant-governor of that state, mayor of the city of New York, and high in the confidence of the party. His pretensions were sustained by Gideon Granger, the postmaster-general, and other influential democrats.

In this state of things, Mr. Madison was waited upon by several of the leading republican members of Congress, and informed, in substance, that war with England was now resolved upon by the democratic party, the supporters of his administration; that the people would no longer consent to a dilatory and inefficient course, on the part of the national government; that unless a declaration of war took place previous to the presidential election, the success of the democratic party might be endangered, and the government thrown into the hands of the federalists; that unless Mr. Madison consented to act with his friends, and accede to a declaration of war with Great Britain, neither his nomination nor his re-election to the presidency could be relied on.* Thus situated, Mr. Madison concluded to waive his own objections to the course determined on by his political friends, and to do all he could for the prosecution of a war for which he had no taste; and he pretended to no knowledge of war as a science or profession.

The president did not sustain himself with counsellors adapted to the occasion. His cabinet consisted, at this time, of James Monroe, secretary of state, who succeeded Robert Smith in November, 1811; Albert Gallatin, secretary of the treasury; William Eustis, secretary of war; Paul Hamilton, secretary of the navy; and William Pinkney, attorney-general, who succeeded Cæsar A. Rodney in that office in December, 1811. Of these cabinet officers, Mr. Monroe was the only one of military taste or experience, and he had only performed a limited service in the army of the revolution; Mr. Gallatin was avowedly opposed to the declaration of war; Mr. Eustis, the secretary of war, knew but little of military affairs; and the secretary of the navy had no knowledge of naval affairs to qualify him for his position. The attorney-general, Pinkney, considered the declaration of war premature while government was so entirely unprepared. The postmaster-general, Gideon Granger, not then a cabinet officer, but at the head of a department important for military operations, was disaffected to the president, in party sympathy with senators and others professing, perhaps entertaining, inclinations for the war, but denying that with Madison as leader, it ever could prosper.*

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* This information was derived, by a friend of the writer, from James Fisk, a democratic member of Congress in 1812, and one of a committee who waited on Mr. Madison.

On the 9th of March, 1812, Mr. Madison transmitted to Congress a special message, with certain documents which had been communicated to the executive by John Henry, a native of Ireland, who alleged that he had been employed as a secret agent of the British government, in the New England states, "in intrigues with the disaffected, for the purpose of bringing about resistance to the laws, and eventually, in concert with a British force, of destroying the Union, and forming the eastern part thereof into a political connexion with Great Britain."

John Henry was born a subject of Great Britain. For a while he had resided in this country, and held a commission in the army of the United States. Having left the service, by his own account he resided some time in Vermont, and afterward returned to his natural allegiance, and became a resident of Canada. There, in the beginning of the year 1809, if his own account is to be credited, he was employed by Sir James H. Craig, governor of Canada, to repair to Boston, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the federal politicians of the New England states, particularly those of Massachusetts, were desirous of withdrawing from the Union, and forming a close connexion with Great Britain. Accordingly, in the month of February of that year, he commenced his journey, and after spending some time in Vermont, and passing through New Hampshire, he reached Boston early in the month of March. Having taken his station in the New England capital, he opened his correspondence with his employers in Canada. His first letter is dated March 5, 1809, in which he remarked that it had not thus far appeared necessary for him to discover to any person the object of his visit; nor was it probable that he should find it necessary, for the purpose of gaining a knowledge of the arrangements of the federal party, to avow himself as a regular authorized agent of the British government, even to those who would keep the secret—that he had sufficient means of information to enable him to judge of the proper time for offering the co-operation of Great Britain, and opening a correspondence between the governor-general of British America and disaffected individuals in Massachusetts. Accordingly, he remained unknown at Boston till the 25th of May following, when he wrote to his principals at Quebec, that it would be unnecessary for him, in the existing state of things, and unavailing also, to attempt to carry into effect the original purposes of his mission. He was soon recalled from that mission, and returned to Canada; and in 1811 was in England, petitioning the British government for compensation for his services above mentioned. For some cause or other, the ministry declined paying him; but referred him to the governor of Canada, on the ground that they had not discovered any wish on the part of Sir James Craig that Henry's claims for compensation should be referred to the mother-country, and because no allusion was made to any kind of arrangement or agreement that had been made by that officer with him.*

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* Ingersoll's History of the War.

Mr. Sullivan remarks, that "there are many persons who remember John Henry, and that he was in Boston in 1809. But no one ever heard it suggested that he was a British agent. He was said to be engaged in some sort of land speculation; but very few knew or cared how he was employed. He was a handsome, well-behaved man, and was received in some respectable families."

The British minister at Washington, in a letter to Mr. Monroe, the secretary of state, dated the 11th of March, 1812, disclaimed most solemnly, on his own part, having had any knowledge whatever of the existence of such a mission, or of such transactions as the communication of Mr. Henry referred to, and expressed his conviction that, from what he knew of those branches of his majesty's government with which he had intercourse, no countenance whatever was given by them to any schemes hostile to the internal tranquillity of the United States.

The committee on foreign relations, in Congress, to whom the message and documents were referred, in their report, remarked that, "The transaction disclosed by the president's message, presents to the mind of the committee conclusive evidence, that the British government, at a period of peace, and during the most friendly professions, have been deliberately and perfidiously pursuing measures to divide these states, and to involve our citizens in all the guilt of treason, and the horrors of a civil war."

Henry, in this transaction, was accompanied by a foreign adventurer, who called his name Crillon, and claimed the title of count. He went through a long examination before the committee of foreign relations, but his testimony was considered unimportant.

It appears that Henry, after being unsuccessful in England, in urging his claims upon that government, sailed for the United States, and arrived at Boston in December, 1811. He visited Governor Gerry, of Massachusetts, who gave him a letter of introduction to Mr. Madison.

In February, 1812, he made his disclosures to the president, for which he received fifty thousand dollars, which were drawn from the treasury, on account of the secret service fund, in the name of John Graham, chief clerk in the office of secretary of state. Henry left Washington on the 11th of February, and on the 9th of March he sailed for France, in the United States sloop-of-war Wasp.

It is a curious fact, that Henry had been at Washington, had got his money, and had returned northwardly, and was at Baltimore on the 11th of February, and that his letter of disclosure to James Monroe is dated the 20th of that month, at Philadelphia. It is remarkable that Mr. Madison had these disclosures at least twenty-five days before he made them known to Congress; that when he did so make them known, Henry was actually under sail for France, and, consequently, could not be called on for any explanation.*

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* Dwight's History and Review.

The Henry plot proved of no advantage to the administration and its supporters, but had a tendency to increase and extend the feelings of exasperation and enmity toward the government, entertained by a large majority of the New England people, whose characters were assailed by the pretended exposure of Henry, although he did not mention the name of even a solitary person who ever uttered a sentence of disaffection to the Union, or of a wish to form a connexion with Great Britain. Besides a majority of the people of New England, the federal party throughout the Union, and a respectable portion of the democratic party, were opposed to the approaching declaration of war. Still, the leading men among the friends of the administration felt a confidence that the measure was required, and would be sustained, by a majority of the people.

After the return of Mr. Pinkney to the United States, from his mission to England, Mr. Madison appointed Jonathan Russell charge d'affaires of the United States at London. Mr. Russell reached London in November, 1811. On the 14th of February, 1812, he wrote to Mr. Monroe, secretary of state, that at that time there had been exhibited no evidence on the part of the British government to repeal the orders in council. On the 4th of March he wrote to Mr. Monroe, informing him that he had attended the discussions in parliament, on motions by Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Brougham, "and if anything was wanting to prove the inflexible determination of the present ministry to persevere in the orders in council, without modification or relaxation, the declarations of the leading members of administration on these occasions, must place it beyond the possibility of a doubt. Mr. Percival said, 'As England was contending for the defence of her maritime rights, and for the preservation of her national existence, which essentially depended on the maintenance of those rights, she could not be expected, in the prosecution of this great and primary interest, to arrest or vary her course, to listen to the pretensions of neutral nations, or to remove the evils, however they might be regretted, which the imperious policy of the times indirectly and unintentionally extended to them.'

"I no longer entertain a hope that we can honorably avoid war."

On the 30th of May, 1812, Mr. Foster, the British minister at Washington, addressed a long letter to Mr. Monroe, in which he reviewed the whole ground of controversy between the United States and Great Britain.

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* Sullivan.

He contends that the Berlin and Milan decrees had not, in fact, been revoked, and concludes as follows:—

"I am commanded, sir, to express, on the part of his royal highness, the prince regent, that while his royal highness entertains the most sincere desire to conciliate America, he yet can never concede that the blockade of May, 1806, could justly be made the foundation, as it avowedly has been, for the decrees of Bonaparte; and further, that the British government must ever consider the principles on which that blockade rested (accompanied as it was by an adequate blockading force), to have been strictly consonant to the established law of nations, and a legitimate instance of the practice which it recognises.

"Secondly, that Great Britain must continue to reject the other spurious doctrines promulgated by France in the duke of Bassano's report, as binding upon all nations. She can not admit, as a true declaration of public law, that free ships make free goods, nor the converse of that proposition, that enemy's ships destroy the character of neutral property in the cargo: she can not consent, by the adoption of such a principle, to deliver absolutely the commerce of France from the pressure of the naval power of Great Britain, and, by the abuse of the neutral flag, to allow her enemy to obtain, without the expense of sustaining a navy, for the trade and property of French subjects, a degree of freedom and security which even the commerce of her own subjects can not find under the protection of the British navy.

"She can not admit, as a principle of public law, that arms and military stores are alone contraband of war, and that ship-timber and naval stores are excluded from that description. Neither can she admit, wlthout retaliation, that the mere fact of commercial intercourse with British ports and subjects should be made a crime in all nations, and that the armies and decrees of France should be directed to enforce a principle so new and unheard-of in war.

"Great Britain feels, that to relinquish her just measures of self-defence and retaliation, would be to surrender the best means of her own preservation and rights; and with them the rights of other nations, so long as France maintains and acts upon such principles."

Such was the state of things between the United States and Great Britain, when it was determined by the friends of the administration in Congress, to declare war. As a prelude to that event, an act was passed on the 4th of April, 1812, laying an embargo on vessels of the United States for the term of ninety days.

On the 20th of April, George Clinton, vice-president of the United States, died at Washington, at the age of seventy-three. The senate had previously elected William H. Crawford president *pro tem.* of that body.

Louisiana was admitted into the Union as a state on the 8th of April, 1812; and by a subsequent act on the 4th of June, the territory before called Louisiana, was organized under the name of the Missouri territory.

Among other important acts passed at this session, besides the declaration of war were the following: To prohibit the exportation of specie, goods, wares, or merchandise, from the United States during the continuance of the embargo; for the establishment of a general land office in the treasury department; to provide for the surveying of six millions of acres of the public lands, to be set apart and reserved for the purpose of satisfying the bounties of one hundred and sixty acres each promised to the soldiers of the United States by the acts previously passed for augmenting the army; authorizing the issue of five millions of dollars in treasury-notes; imposing one hundred per cent. additional duties on imports; confirming grants to lands in the Mississippi territory, on British or Spanish warrants made prior to October 27, 1795; appropriating an additional sum for the Cumberland road; establishing various postroads; prohibiting American vessels from trading with the enemy; and an act authorizing a subscription for the old six per cent. and deferred stocks, and providing for an exchange of the same. A law was also passed for the apportionment of representatives in Congress according to the census of 1810.

The elections in 1812, in those states where the same were held in the spring, were generally unfavorable to the administration; although the opinion was entertained and expressed, by a large proportion of the people, that Congress would not declare war. The federal party prevailed in the elections in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and NewYork; showing a considerable change in favor of that party, compared with the elections of the previous year.

It was with some difficulty that a majority of Congress were induced to vote for the preliminary measures to the declaration of war; but on the question of the embargo, the majority in the house of representatives was twenty-nine votes, in favor of the act.

On the first of June, the president transmitted a special message to Congress, in which he reviewed the difficulties which had occurred in our relations with Great Britain, and those which then existed; describing, in strong language, the aggressions with which we had been visited by that nation. This message was referred to the committee on foreign relations, in the house of representatives, a majority of whom, viz., John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina; Felix Grundy, of Tennessee; John Smilie, of Pennsylvania; John A. Harper, of New Hampshire; Joseph Desha, of Kentucky; and Ebenezer Seaver, of Massachusetts, agreed upon, and reported to the house on the 3d of June, a manifesto, as the basis of a declaration of war. The reasons given by the committee for recommending an immediate appeal to arms were, in substance, as follows: The impressment of American seamen by the commanders of British ships-of-war; the British doctrine and system of blockade; and the adoption and continuance of the orders in council of that government; which operated extensively to the interruption and injury of the American commerce. To which was added a long and unsatisfied demand for remuneration on account of depredations committed by English subjects on the lawful commerce of the United States.

During the proceedings on the subject of the declaration of war, Congress sat with closed doors. The measure was adopted in the house of representatives by a vote of 79 to 49; but was delayed in the senate for fourteen days after it was submitted to that body, when it finally passed, 19 to 13. At first it was evident that the majority was against war; and a proposition was made, on which the senate were equally divided on the first vote, for granting reprisals against the commerce of Great Britain, by public or private ships of the United States; but after several days of discipline and urging, a majority voted in favor of it. Of the 79 members of the house who voted for the war, 62 resided south, and 17 north, of the Delaware; of the 19 senators who voted on the same side, 14 resided south, and 5 north, of the Delaware. Thus the war may be said to have been a measure of the *south* and *west*, to take care of the interests of the *north*, much against the will of the latter. The whole number of members in both branches, residing north of the Delaware, was 68, of whom only 21 voted for the war.*

The act declaring war was approved by the president on the 18th of June, 1812, and is remarkably short and comprehensive. It was drawn by the attorney-general of the United States, William Pinkney, and is in the words following:—

"*An act declaring war between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dependencies thereof, and the United States of America and their territories.*

"*Be it enacted, &c.* That war be, and the same is hereby declared to exist between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dependencies thereof, and the United States of America and their territories; and that the president of the United States is hereby authorized to use the whole land and naval force of the United States to carry the same into effect, and to issue to private armed vessels of the United States commissions, or letters of marque and general reprisal, in such form as he shall think proper, and under the seal of the United States, against the vessels, goods, and effects, of the government of the said United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the subjects thereof."

On the day following the date of the above act, the president issued his proclamation announcing the fact, and calling upon the people of the United States to sustain the public authorities in the measures to be adopted for obtaining a speedy, a just, and an honorable peace.

Immediately after the declaration of war was announced, a party was organized, composed principally of the federalists and some disaffected democrats, under the name of "the peace party." This party endeavored to compel the government to make peace by raising every possible obstruction to the prosecution of the war. This course was considered as more actuated by feelings of party spirit than by patriotism, and many prominent federalists gave the government their support, whenever they found them disposed to carry on the war with vigor and effect.

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* Sullivan.

On the 26th of June, Congress passed an act respecting letters of marque, prizes, and prize goods; and great expectations were entertained of the injuries to be inflicted upon British commerce by our privateers, as well as the profits to be gained thereby, by American adventurers in such enterprises.

There was a great incongruity between appropriations for the war and provision for them, and, without a cent to be raised by taxes, more than fifteen millions of dollars were appropriated for the army, and nearly two millions seven hundred thousand for the navy, when the income by customs and sales of public lands, in 1812, was only about nine millions and a half. The only fiscal measures of the twelfth Congress at the first session, were a loan of eleven millions of dollars, authorized by act of the 14th of March, 1812, doubling the duties on importations, and providing for the issue of five millions of treasury-notes.

The British government had resisted the demand of the American government, for the repeal of the orders in council, from August, 1810, to May, 1812, on the specific ground that the French decree of revocation of the former date was conditional. But upon receiving official intelligence that France had definitively revoked her decrees, the British orders in council were repealed in June, 1812, within five days after the declaration of war by Congress. A little delay on the part of the American government would have removed this ground of controversy, and left nothing for this country to contend for but freedom from impressment. The French emperor had authorized his minister to declare to the American government, that the Berlin and Milan decrees were revoked on the 1st of November, 1810. Upon this annunciation, application was made by our government to that of Great Britain, to follow the example set by France, and repeal their orders in council. This was refused on the part of Great Britain, on the ground that the revocation of the French decrees was not absolute, but was conditional. This question gave rise to repeated and labored discussions between the two governments, the American negotiators maintaining with great zeal that the repeal was absolute, and those of Great Britain contending with equal pertinacity that it was conditional. In the course of a conversation between Mr. Barlow, the American minister in France, with the duke of Bassano, in May, 1812, the duke produced a decree, dated April 28, 1811, more than a year previous, declaring the Berlin and Milan decrees definitively revoked, and to date from the 1st of November, 1810.

Immediately after the act declaring war was passed by Congress, the federal members of the house of representatives who were in the minority on that occasion, published an address to their constituents. It is a paper of great ability, and sets forth the state of the country at that time, the course of the administration, and its supporters in Congress, and the reasons of the minority for opposing the war.

The sentiments and views of the friends of the administration, the advocates of the war, are shown in the remarks of Mr. Clay, speaker of the house of representatives, in a debate on the embargo question, in April, 1812. "Mr. Clay warmly expressed his satisfaction and full approbation of the president's message, and the proposition now before the committee (the embargo). He approved of it, because it is to be viewed as a direct precursor to war. He considered this as a war measure, and as such he should discuss it. Sir, after the pledges we have made, and the stand we have taken, are we now to cover ourselves with shame and indelible disgrace, by retreating from the measures and ground we have taken? He did not think we were upon this occasion in the least embarrassed by the conduct of France in burning our vessels; that may be a subject of future consideration. We have complete evidence as to the enemy whom we have selected. As weak and imbecile as we are, we would combine France if necessary. There is no intrinsic difficulty or terror in the war; there is no terror except what arises from the novelty. Where are we to come in contact with our enemy? On our own continent. If gentlemen please to call these sentiments quixotic, he would say he pitied them for their sense of honor. We know no pains have been spared to vilify the government. If we now proceed we shall be supported by the people. Many of our people have not believed that war is to take place. They have been wilfully blinded. He was willing to give them further notice. It remains for us to say whether we will shrink, or follow up the patriotic conduct of the president. As an American and a member of this house, he felt a pride that the executive had recommended this measure. He said he was at issue with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Randolph) as to the public sentiment. That it is with us, is proved by the glowing and patriotic resolutions of fourteen legislatures. He said there was no division in the southern and western states—federalists and republicans were united for war."*

On the 18th of May, 1812, James Madison was nominated for re-election as president of the United States, by a caucus of eighty-two republican members of Congress. The vote in caucus in favor of Mr. Madison was unanimous. John Langdon, of New Hampshire, was nominated for vice-president, but as he declined on account of his advanced age, being then seventy-one years old, Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, received the nomination in his stead, on the 8th of June. The opposing candidate for the presidency was De Witt Clinton, who was nominated at a meeting of the republican members of the legislature, on the 29th of May, 1812. Of 91 members present at the caucus, 87 approved of the nomination of Mr. Clinton. The federalists held a convention in the city of New York, in September, 1812, when seventy members were present, from eleven states. It was resolved to support Mr. Clinton, as the best chance of defeating Mr. Madison. Jared Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania, was nominated for vice-president, in opposition to Mr. Gerry.

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* Niles's Register, vol. v., p. 105.

Congress adjourned on the 6th of July, 1812; previous to which they passed a resolution requesting the president to recommend a day of public humiliation and prayer to be observed by the people of the United States, and the offering of supplications to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of the states, his blessing on their arms, and the speedy restoration of peace. The president therefore issued his proclamation on the 9th of July, recommending the third Thursday in August to be set apart for the above purpose, which day was accordingly observed.

On the 26th of June, or eight days after the declaration of war, Mr. Monroe, secretary of state, wrote to Mr. Russell, chargé des affaires of the United States in England, informing him of the declaration, and authorizing him to propose an armistice to the British government, if the orders in council were repealed, and no illegal blockades substituted for them—also that orders were given to discontinue the impressment of seamen. The British government, through Lord Castlereagh, on the 29th of August, communicated to Mr. Russell their refusal to accede to the proposition of the government of the United States, "as being on various grounds absolutely inadmissible." Mr. Russell therefore demanded and obtained his passports, and left England in September.

When the orders in council were repealed, on the 23d of June, 1812, almost simultaneously with our declaration of war, the expectation in England was so strong of the war being prevented or stopped, that the first step of the British ex-minister to the United States, when he reached Halifax, on his way to England, was to send to the governor-general of Canada, to propose to the American government terms of pacification. Mr. Foster had, no doubt, assured his government that war would never be declared, as the opponents of the measure had encouraged him in the persuasion that it was impossible. And when the British orders in council were repealed, that government had every reason to be confident that it neither could nor would be persevered in. Great Britain was, moreover, at that moment, absorbed by her stupendous struggle with France, and her statesmen had neither time, means, nor thought, to bestow upon a remote and comparatively insignificant conflict on this side of the Atlantic, with an unarmed, unwarlike, and divided people. Nearly seven months therefore elapsed after the declaration of war, before England took any important step of counteraction. The English manifesto was not issued till the

9th of January, 1813. The blockade of the Chesapeake and Delaware was not proclaimed till the 26th of December, 1812. British naval forces on the American coasts and stations did not appear in any formidable numbers till February, 1813, on the 4th of which month and year, Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, then naval commander-in-chief, took possession of Hampton Roads, in the Chesapsake bay, with two ships-of-the-line, four frigates, and several smaller vessels-of-war. In the spring of the year 1813, the British fleets on the American coasts and stations, from Halifax to Bermuda, consisted of six 74 gunships, 13 frigates, and 18 sloops-of-war; all under the command of Admiral Warren; most of them in the Chesapeake bay, a few in the Delaware bay, and others distributed along the coast. On the 20th of March, 1813, the whole coast of the United States was declared to be in a state of blockade, with the exception of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. The object of the exception of several states was obviously to sow dissension among the United States.*

Admiral Warren had arrived at Halifax in September, 1812, and was invested, not only with an extensive naval command, but also with full power to negotiate a provisional accommodation with our government. On the 30th of September, he wrote from Halifax to Mr. Monroe, the secretary of state, that the departure of Mr. Foster from America had devolved on the admiral the charge of making known to the government of the United States the sentiments entertained by the prince regent upon the existing relations of the two countries. The orders in council, he said, ceased to exist nearly at the same time that the United States declared war; on receipt of which declaration, an order in council, dated 31st of July, was issued, to detain American vessels. Under these circumstances, the admiral proposed, as he was directed, the immediate cessation of hostilities between the two countries. Should the American government accede to this proposal for the cessation of hostilities, Admiral Warren was authorized to arrange a revocation of the laws interdicting British commerce and ships-of-war from the harbors and waters of the United States. In default of such revocation, he says, the orders in council of January, 1807, and 1809, were to be revived.

Mr. Monroe's answer to Admiral Warren, dated 27th of October, 1812, informed him that it would be very satisfactory to the president to meet the British government in such arrangements as might terminate, without delay, hostilities, on conditions honorable to both nations. Alluding to the proposition which had been made, through Mr. Russell, for an armistice, which was rejected by the British government, and presuming that it was equally the interest of both countries to adjust the subject of impressment, the president was willing to agree to an armistice, provided Admiral Warren was authorized, and would agree, to negotiate terms by which impressment should be suspended. Experience, it was said, had evinced that no peace could be durable unless that object was provided for. The United States could not admit or acquiesce in the right of impressment during negotiation. The orders in council having been repealed, and no illegal blockades revived or substituted in their stead, and an understanding being obtained on the subject of impressment, the president was willing to agree to a cessation of hostilities, with a view to arrange by treaty every other subject of controversy.

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* Ingersoll.

The British government refusing these terms of accommodation, war was continued for the single grievance of impressment, with the English menace that such blockades as the repealed orders in council authorized, that is, illegal blockades, which Lord Melville pronounced impracticable, would also be enforced.

The conditions proffered by our government, through Mr. Russell, their chargé d'affaires in London, when war was declared, were stated by the president, in his annual message to Congress, on the 4th of November, 1812, without reference to the rejected overture from Admiral Warren. They were, repeal of the orders in council, no revival of blockades violating established rules, a stop put to the practice of impressment, and immediate discharge of American seamen from British ships. In return, we proffered an act of Congress, not a mere executive assurance, for the exclusion of British seamen, nay, more, all British natives, from our vessels, provided Great Britain excluded Americans from hers. On these terms an armistice, to prevent hostilities and bloodshed, could be improved into definitive and comprehensive adjustment of all depending controversies. These were reasonable and moderate terms; but which, while England was at war with France, there was little hope she would accept, impressment, if there be any right to it, being a war right, at all events a war need. The terms were rejected as soon as proffered to Great Britain.*

Previous to the arrival of Admiral Warren, another attempt had been made on the British side, to bring about a suspension of hostilities. By the advice of Mr. Foster, the British ex-minister, Sir George Prevost, governor of Canada, in July, 1812, despatched his adjutant-general, Baynes, with a flag of truce, to Greenbush, near Albany, where General Dearborn, of the American army, was stationed, to negotiate with him an armistice, which Dearborn was prevailed upon at once to subscribe. It suspended military operations, excepting General Hull's expedition, till the president's pleasure should be ascertained. This proposal was not made by the British government itself, but only through its colonial agents, and might not be sanctioned in England; besides, it was thought it would give advantages to Great Britain, and, constantly insisting on impressment as a grievance to be removed, Mr. Madison at once refused to confirm the act of General Dearborn, rejected the proposed armistice, and persevered in hostilities.

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* Ingersoll.

It is foreign from the object of this sketch to give a detail of the military and naval events of the war. Under the direction of the federal government the war had its course. Many of the people assisted no further than the laws required, and continued to express a desire that it might soon be brought to an end. The opponents of the war, and those who wished for its termination, constantly increased.

The first military effort after the war began, was attended with defeat and disgrace. A considerable army, under General Hull, invaded Upper Canada, but soon returned to Detroit, which post was shortly afterward attacked by a British army, to whom it was surrendered by the American commander, in August, 1812. Several other disasters attended the American arms on the northern and western frontiers during the first year's campaign, but in some instances the American troops showed great bravery, and evinced that they only required skilful direction, to command success.

Most unexpectedly to the administration and the nation, a series of brilliant exploits attended the small naval establishment of the United States; commencing with the capture of the British frigate Guerriere, by the Constitution, Captain Hull, on the 18th of August, 1812. This was followed on the 18th of October, by the surrender of the British brig Frolic to the American sloop-of-war Wasp, Captain Jones; and on the 25th of the same month, the frigate United States, Captain Decatur, captured the British frigate Macedonian. The Constitution was again successful on the 30th of December, when she was commanded by Commodore Bainbridge, and captured the British frigate Java.

This succession of triumphs completely established the navy in public favor, as well as convinced the administration of its importance, and from that period the democratic party abandoned its opposition to a naval establishment, consenting also to its gradual increase. The additional expenses incurred for this purpose were approved by the federalists, as they had always advocated the policy of a navy.

The presidential election in 1812 resulted in the choice of Mr. Madison as president for another term of four years from the 4th of March, 1813, and of Mr. Gerry as vice-president. The opposing candidates, De Witt Clinton and Jared Ingersoll, received the vote of the state of New York, where a section of the democratic party, as well as most of the federalists, sustained the claims of Mr. Clinton; but in other states their supporters were almost exclusively confined to the federal party. The electoral votes stood as follows: For Madison, 128; Gerry, 131; Clinton, 89; Ingersoll, 86. The elections for members of Congress also resulted in a large majority of the friends of the administration; and thus the policy of the war was sustained by a majority of the people; but it was evident that the opposition was powerful and increasing, particularly in the eastern and middle states.

Congress assembled on the 2d of November, 1812, and continued in session until the 3d of March, 1813, when their term expired. The principal acts passed related to the army and navy, and to provide means for carrying on the war. Authority was given to the executive for the construction of four ships of seventy-four guns each, six frigates, and six sloops-of-war; to issue five millions of dollars in treasury-notes; and to create a new stock for a loan of sixteen millions of dollars. Laws were also passed for further augmenting the army, and for the more perfect organization of the same; to encourage vaccination among the citizens of the United States generally; prohibiting the employment on board the public or private armed vessels of any seamen except citizens of the United States, or native persons of color, after the termination of the war. The object of the last act, was to induce the British government to come to some arrangement respecting the impressment of seamen. Another act vested in the president the power of retaliation for any violation of the laws and usages of civilized nations, by British officers, or by Indians in alliance with the British government, or those acting under the authority of the said government. An important bill to the commercial interest was also passed, principally through the efforts of Mr. Cheves, of South Carolina, in its behalf, directing the secretary of the treasury to remit certain fines, penalties, and forfeitures; in other words, to cancel the merchants' bonds given for goods seized under the non-importation act, and imported from Great Britain and Ireland after the declaration of war. This bill was opposed by most of the democratic members in the house of representatives, and was carried by the close vote of 64 to 61.

On the 4th of March, 1813, the second term of Mr. Madison commenced, in consequence of his re-election to the presidency. At twelve o'clock on that day, having attended at the capitol, for the purpose of taking the oath of office, he delivered to the vast concourse of people assembled on the occasion, his inaugural address.

Some changes had taken place in Mr. Madison's cabinet, previous to his re-election. On the 12th of January, 1813, William Jones, of Pennsylvania, was appointed secretary of the navy, in place of Paul Hamilton, resigned; and General John Armstrong, having returned from France, was, on the 13th of January, appointed secretary of war, in place of Doctor Eustis, resigned.

The 13th Congress assembled at the capitol on the 24th of May, 1813, in conformity to an act passed the preceding February, and continued in session until the second of August. The democratic majority in the house of representatives was shown in the election of speaker. Henry Clay was again chosen, receiving 89 votes, to 54 for Mr. Pitkin, of Connecticut, a leading federalist, and there were five scattering votes. The majority, therefore, in favor of the administration, and of the policy of the war, was decided, and in the senate the democratic majority was likewise large, but several of the senators of that party were not particularly friendly to the president and his cabinet, and sought on some occasions to embarrass the administration in various measures proposed, as well as on the subject of nominations to office.

On the 8th of March, 1813, the Russian minister at Washington, Mr. Daschkoff, communicated to the American government an offer from the emperor Alexander, of his mediation between the United States and Great Britain, with a view to bring about peace between them. The Russian minister at the same time declared, that the emperor took pleasure in doing justice to the wisdom of the government of the United States, and was convinced that it had done all that it could to prevent the rupture. On the 11th of March, the president formally accepted the Russian mediation, and in a few days afterward appointed Messrs. Albert Gallatin, John Quincy Adams, and James A. Bayard, commissioners or envoys to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain, under the mediation of the emperor of Russia. Messrs. Gallatin and Bayard embarked soon after from Philadelphia, in the ship Neptune, under a flag of truce, to join Mr. Adams in St. Petersburg, and arrived in the Baltic in June following. It was probably owing to the confidential relation between Mr. Adams and the emperor, that the mediation of Russia was tendered; and it appears, by official documents, to have been first suggested to Mr. Adams, at St. Petersburg, by the Russian minister, Romanzoff, on the 20th of September, 1812; before he communicated the same to Mr. Daschkoff, Russian ambassador to the United States.

Mr. Adams was then American minister at the Russian court, having been appointed by Mr. Madison to that mission, in 1809. It was not till October, 1812, that Mr. Adams had information of our war, and not till December, 1812, did he get a duplicate of his despatches from Washington, dated July 1st, 1812, to apprize him of the war declared nearly six months before. Meantime, the French invasion of Russia had been driven back to Poland, where Mr. Barlow, American minister to France, was invited to meet the French emperor at Wilna; on his way to which place he died, at Czarnovitch, the 26th of December, 1812. When there was reason to believe that the coalition, of which Russia and Great Britain were the principal members, would triumph over the French, the Russian emperor proffered his mediation to put a stop to hostilities between the United States and Great Britain, which interrupted American commerce with Russia.*

The Russian mediation was declined by the British government, in September, 1813, but on the 4th of November Lord Castlereagh informed the American government that Great Britain was willing to enter upon a direct negotiation for peace. This proposition was accepted by President

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* Ingersoll.

Madison, and Lord Castlereagh was informed that measures would be taken for carrying it into effect, at Gottenburg, in Sweden. The place of meeting was, however, afterward changed to Ghent, in Belgium.

When the nomination of Messrs. Gallatin, Adams, and Bayard, as envoys to negotiate peace, came before the senate, on the 31st of May, 1813, the two latter were confirmed, but Mr. Gallatin was rejected, 18 to 17, on the ground that the offices of envoy extraordinary and secretary of the treasury are incompatible, and ought not to be united in the same person. The president informed the senate that the office of secretary of the treasury was not vacant, but in the absence of Mr. Gallatin the duties of that office were performed by William Jones, secretary of the navy. Mr. Gallatin was afterward nominated, when no longer secretary of the treasury, and confirmed. Several other nominations by the president were rejected by the senate at this session.

The principal business of Congress at this session, was to provide means for paying the interest on loans already authorized, and other matters incident to the war. The financial plan which had been proposed by Mr. Gallatin, secretary of the treasury, to raise the necessary funds, was simply to double the existing duties on imports, as had been done, and by laying the necessary internal taxes, to raise an annual revenue sufficient to pay the ordinary expenses of government, and the interest of such sums as it would become necessary to borrow; and to support the war by a series of loans. But internal taxes were very unpopular, and Congress was slow in imposing them. Mr. Madison was of opinion that the people would not take war and taxation together, and the majority of the twelfth Congress deemed it advisable to refrain from imposing direct taxes, until the presidential election had taken place. Their successors of the thirteenth Congress were therefore called upon to provide the means referred to. This was done by passing acts for the assessment and collection of direct taxes and internal duties; soon followed by acts imposing duties on refined sugars, sales at auction, retailers' licenses, stamps, carriages, licenses to distillers, and a direct tax of three millions of dollars a year.

The national finances at this period, were in a state of much embarrassment. Treasury-notes, issued according to act of Congress, were at a great discount; and although the first loan in 1812 was taken at par for six per cent. stock, the second loan authorized by government was taken on disadvantageous terms for the United States, and all paid in depreciated currency. The banks in the Union had suspended specie payments, excepting a part of those of the New England states. In the early part of 1813, the demands on the public treasury were far greater than had been anticipated, owing to the unfavorable circumstances in which the country was placed, and the improvident course of the administration in carrying on the war. When the militia, particularly of the middle states, were called out, they were not sufficiently armed, and extraordinary expenses were incurred to equip them. There was also a great deficiency of blankets and other clothing for the soldiers, as the importations had been restricted, and the manufacture of woollens was then comparatively small in the United States.

Still, the war served to show the strength of the government, and the patriotism of the citizens. Although a bare majority of the people approved of the war, and probably the majority was desirous of closing it in six months, after the offers of the British government for further negotiations, and the great disasters suffered by the army on the borders of Canada, the administration was supported, or certainly not opposed by any disorderly or violent acts. The power of the federal government proved adequate to the crisis; but the people, in various parts of the nation, complained of the measures of the government, and censured its war policy; and that no formidable opposition appeared, must be attributed to the patriotic feelings of the citizens, and to their conviction of the necessity of order and obedience to all constitutional authority. With a population of a different character from that of the great majority of the people of the United States, and with the freedom they possessed, it would have been difficult to maintain a war, when so great a portion of the nation disapproved of it.*

The invasion of Canada was renewed in the spring of 1813, and General Dearborn, with a small army, crossed Lake Ontario, from Sackett's Harbor, and captured York (now Toronto), in Upper Canada. General Dearborn afterward made another expedition into Canada, with a large body of troops, and took possession of Fort George, at the entrance of the Niagara river into Lake Ontario. The British retreated to Burlington heights, where they were followed by a detachment of American troops under Generals Chandler and Winder. But the latter were surprised by a night attack on their camp, and both of the generals captured, after which the detachment retreated toward Fort George. In the month of January previous, General Winchester, with about 800 men, fought a battle with the British and Indians, at the Maumee rapids, in Ohio, and, after the loss of about 300 men killed in the action, was forced to capitulate to General Proctor. The losses sustained by the United States troops in Canada and on the frontier, in 1812 and 1813, were estimated to amount to 8,500 men, in killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. In September, 1813, the capture of the British fleet on Lake Erie, by the American fleet under Commodore Perry, was followed in October by the defeat of the British and Indians under General Proctor, on the banks of the river Thames, in Upper Canada, by the Americans under General Harrison. In this action Tecumseh, a celebrated Indian chief, was killed, and this victory put an end to the Indian confederacy against the United States, which had been organized by that chief.

Many other engagements and military affairs of minor importance occurred on the frontiers during the year 1813; and in the southern part of the United States a war with the Creek Indians was brought to a close, in consequence of repeated defeats of the Indians, by the Americans under General Andrew Jackson. The principal naval events were as follows: The capture of the British brig Peacock by the American sloop-of-war Hornet, Captain Lawrence, on the 24th of February; the loss of the United States frigate Chesapeake, which was taken by the British frigate Shannon, on the 18th of June, when Captain Lawrence, who had been promoted to the command of the Chesapeake, was killed, with many of his officers and men; the capture, by the British brig Pelican of the American brig Argus, Captain Allen, on the 14th of August; and in September, the capture of the British brig Boxer by the American brig Enterprise, Lieutenant Burrows, who was killed in the action.

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* Bradford.

In the meantime, the Atlantic coast of the United States was closely blockaded by British squadrons, cutting off most of the coasting trade, as well as a large share of the remnant of foreign commerce, and committing various depredations, particularly in Delaware and Chesapeake bays. But the naval efforts of Great Britain on the American seaboard, continued insignificant throughout the year 1813. At the same time, the American privateers were active and successful; nor were the British squadrons enabled to put an entire stop to American commerce. Cotton and other staples of this country were exported in profitable adventures to France, Spain, and elsewhere, and the imports into the United States were larger in amount than might have been expected. Mr. Ingersoll says, that American commercial losses by war did not excessively surpass those which before its declaration were caused to American commerce by English seizures and sequestrations, together with French unlawful depredations.

During the year 1813, the American frigates President, Captain Rodgers, the Congress, Captain Smith, the Essex, Captain Porter, and other vessels-of-war, made long and unmolested cruises, traversing the seas of various quarters of the globe, and making many captures. The Essex proceeded to the Pacific ocean, and in the course of a few months captured, manned, and armed, nine large English vessels, worth two millions of dollars. Captain Porter was for some time commodore of a fleet of his own creation. More than seven hundred British vessels were taken by the American navy and privateers, during the years 1812 and 1813.

The second session of the 13th Congress began on the 6th of December, 1813, and ended on the 18th of April, 1814. Mr. Clay, having been appointed one of the commissioners to negotiate a treaty of peace, resigned his station as speaker of the house, on the 19th of January, and Langdon Cheves, of South Carolina, was elected speaker in his place. Mr. Cheves received 94 votes, Mr. Grundy, of Tennessee, 59, and there were 12 scattering votes. It was understood that Mr. Cheves was preferred and voted for by the opposition members, and Mr. Grundy by a majority of the friends of the administration.

Messrs. Clay and Russell were added to the commissioners to negotiate a treaty of peace, in January, 1814, and immediately sailed for Europe after their appointment. The commissioners were arranged by the president and senate in the following order: John Quincy Adams, James A. Bayard, Henry Clay, Jonathan Russell, and Albert Gallatin. The four first-named were confirmed as commissioners to proceed to Gottenburg, in January, and Mr. Gallatin in February, 1814. Messrs. Adams, Gallatin, and Bayard, were in St. Petersburg in October and November, 1813.

The first act of a general character passed at this session of Congress, was a law laying an embargo on all ships and vessels within the limits or jurisdiction of the United States, to continue till the first of January, 1815, unless a cessation of hostilities should take place sooner. The provisions of this act were very restrictive and severe, the principal object being to prevent small vessels and boats from supplying the British squadrons on the coast with provisions. It was repealed, however, on the 14th of April following, by the same Congress.

The other acts of the session, besides those authorizing additional loans, related principally to the army and navy, and other matters connected with the prosecution of the war. Soldiers enlisting for five years, or during the war, were to receive a bounty of one hundred dollars each in advance, and twenty-four dollars more, in addition to their regular pay, when discharged from the service. Volunteer corps engaging to serve for five years or during the war, were to receive the same bounty, pay, rations, clothing, and forage, as the regular army. Pensions were granted to the orphans and widows of persons slain in the public or private armed vessels of the United States. One hundred dollars were directed to be paid for each prisoner captured by American privateers and delivered to any agent authorized by the United States to receive prisoners-of-war, and two hundred thousand dollars were appropriated for that purpose. The president was authorized to cause the marine corps to be augmented, by enlisting about seven hundred additional men. An act for calling out the militia, provided for the establishment of courts-martial of their own officers, for the trial of delinquents, in the manner required by the rules of the regular army. This law was deemed severe, and created considerable alarm and dissatisfaction.

During the year 1814, the war was prosecuted with vigor and zeal on both sides. The means for supporting it were augmented by the United States government, in every possible way, although the public credit was much depreciated, and treasury-notes fell as low as seventeen per cent., and the stock for the public loans to thirty per cent. below par. The British, particularly on the ocean, acted with more efficiency than in the two previous years. Their ships-of-war hovered upon our coasts in all directions, sometimes entering harbors and landing bodies of men, who destroyed the property and excited the alarm of the inhabitants. They took possession of Eastport and Castine, in Maine, which was then under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, and the want of a sufficient naval force prevented the Americans from dispossessing them.

The peace of Paris, in 1814, released the British fleets and armies which had been so long employed in the wars of Europe, and left the English at liberty to direct their strength against the United States. Some of the veteran troops which had served in the campaigns under the duke of Wellington, were sent across the Atlantic. The armies in Canada were strengthened, and preparations were made to invade the United States from that quarter.

The principal British force in Upper Canada was placed under the command of General Drummond, while the American army on the Niagara frontier was commanded by General Brown. Most of the older American generals had retired from active service, and more efficient officers were now at the head of the troops. On the 3d of July, Generals Scott and Ripley, with 3,000 men, crossed the Niagara river and took Fort Erie, opposite Buffalo. On the 5th, the Americans under those two generals met the British army under General Riall, when a severe battle took place, in which the British were defeated, with the loss of about 500 men, while the total American loss was 338. On the 25th of July the most sanguinary and obstinate battle that occurred during the war was fought at Bridgewater, or Lundy's Lane, near Niagara falls, General Brown commanding the American forces, assisted by Generals Scott and Ripley. The American troops on this occasion numbered less than 4,000, while the British were about 5,000, and their loss was 878 men. The Americans lost 858, and were left in quiet possession of the field; they then retired to Fort Erie, and, Generals Brown and Scott having been wounded, General Gaines arrived and took the command. On the 15th of August, the English, under General Drummond, made an assault upon the fort, but were repulsed with the loss of nearly a thousand men. General Brown having resumed the command, a successful sortie was made from the fort on the 17th of September, soon after which the British, having again lost about 1,000 men in the last affair, retired to Fort George, in expectation of an attack on that place, from another American army.. In November Fort Erie was abandoned and destroyed, and the American troops crossing the river, went into winter quarters at Buffalo and its vicinity.

Meanwhile the English had concentrated an army of over 14,000 men, in Lower Canada, under the command of Sir George Prevost, for the purpose of invading the United States by way of Lake Champlain. The Americans had an army at Plattsburgh, on that lake, commanded by General Macomb. They had also a fleet on the lake, of four armed vessels and ten gunboats and galleys, under the command of Commodore Macdonough. The British fleet, under Commodore Downie, consisted of four armed vessels and thirteen gunboats. The British army arrived before Plattsburgh on the 6th of September, and on the 11th a simultaneous attack was made by land and water, on the American forces. After an action of two hours, the guns of the enemy's squadron were silenced, the larger vessels were captured, three of the gunboats were sunk, and the others escaped down the lake. The battle on the land continued during the day, but after being repulsed three times, in attempting to storm the American works, and witnessing the capture of their fleet, the English retreated about dusk. Their loss in killed, wounded, taken, and deserters, was about 2,500 men.

On the Atlantic coast various events of interest occurred during the year. Among the most important were the affairs on the borders of the Chesapeake bay and the Potomac river. On the 19th of August, a British army of 5,000 men, under General Ross, landed on the Patuxent and commenced a march toward Washington city. The American flotilla under Commodore Barney was abandoned and burnt. Advancing by the way of Bladensburg, the British army was met by a small body of seamen and marines, but the latter were soon overpowered, and the commodore taken prisoner. The enemy then proceeded to Washington, and on the 24th burnt the capitol, the president's house, and other public buildings, after which they retreated to their ships. There were a few regular troops, under General Winder, and some militia regiments, in the vicinity of Washington, but they made but a feeble resistance to the British army, and soon fled. The president, and the secretaries of state, war, and the navy, were in the camp, and narrowly escaped capture, by a timely flight.

A British squadron had in the meantime ascended the Potomac, and on the 29th appeared before Alexandria, and as that city was destitute of any means of defence, the inhabitants were compelled to ransom the place by giving up to the enemy the merchandise on sale in the city, and the shipping at the wharves.

General Ross, after his return to the British fleet with his troops, resolved to lead them to an attack upon Baltimore. But the citizens of that place made extensive preparations for a defence, and the militia of the city and vicinity, forming an army of 15,000 men, were placed under arms, to meet the enemy. The British fleet passed up the Patapsco and bombarded Fort M'Henry, and the army was landed at North point, fourteen miles below Baltimore. Being repulsed in their attack upon Fort M'Henry, and having lost their commander, General Ross, who was killed in a skirmish with a part of the American troops, the British retired to their ships, on the 14th of September, and soon after left the Chesapeake.

On the coasts of New England, British squadrons were constantly kept up; and fleets were also stationed off the harbor of New-York, and in

Delaware bay. The port of Stonington, in Connecticut, was bombarded in August, but the militia being assembled in great numbers for defence, no landing was effected in that quarter by the British troops. During the summer, that part of Maine which lies east of the Penobscot river was occupied by the enemy, and the United States frigate Adams and many merchant vessels lying in the Penobscot river, and others, were destroyed or fell into their hands.

The blockade of the harbors kept a considerable part of the American navy from opportunities of adventuring at sea, but several of the national ships-of-war, and numerous privateers, were still able to elude the vigilance of the enemy and to keep the seas. The actions fought by vessels of the navy and by privateers, were highly creditable to American valor and nautical skill, although sometimes overpowered by superior force. On the 28th of March the frigate Essex was taken in the harbor of Valparaiso, on the Pacific ocean, after a desperate action, by two British vessels, the frigate Phœbe and the Cherub sloop-of-war. The other actions of note this year by the navy, were the capture of the British sloop-of-war Epervier, in the gulf of Mexico, by the new United States sloop-of-war Peacock, and the sloop-of-war Wasp, Captain Blakeley, captured in succession, in the English channel, the Reindeer and Avon, two vessels of similar force with herself. She also made prizes of numerous British merchant vessels.

The United States frigate President, Commodore Decatur, on sailing from the port of New York, in January, 1815, was captured by a British fleet; but the two last naval actions of the war were favorable to the Americans. In February, 1815, the frigate Constitution captured at the same time two vessels-of-war, the Cyane and Levant, off the island of Madeira, and in March the United States sloop-of-war Hornet captured the brig Penguin, off the coast of Brazil.

The last important action of the war was the battle of New Orleans, on the 8th of January, 1815, when General Jackson, with 6,000 men, defeated a British army of 12,000 men under General Packenham. The loss of the British on that occasion was 700 killed and 1,000 wounded; among the former was the commander-in-chief; and the next in command, Generals Gibbs and Keene, were severely wounded. The loss of the Americans was only seven killed and six wounded. The British army withdrew after the action, and retreated to their shipping.

The celebrated Hartford convention was held at the close of the year 1814. The cause and circumstances of that affair were in substance as follows, as stated by the secretary of the convention:—

The situation of the New England states during the year 1814, was in the highest degree critical and dangerous. The services of the militia for two years, had been extremely severe; they were constantly taken from their farms and their ordinary occupations, and in addition to all the losses which such a state of things must necessarily produce, they were subjected to the hardships and hazards of a camp, and the life of a soldier. In the meantime the United States had withheld all supplies for the maintenance of the militia for the year 1814, both in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and thus forced upon the states the burden of supporting the troops employed in defending their coasts from invasion, and their towns from being sacked and pillaged. And all this time the taxes laid to carry on the war were exacted from those states with the most rigorous promptness. It had become apparent, that if the New England states were rescued from the effects of these calamities at all, it must depend, as far as human means were concerned, upon their own exertions.

In Massachusetts the danger to which the inhabitants near the seacoast were exposed, had spread an alarm through the commonwealth. Early in the year 1814, memorials from a great number of towns, from the interior as well as near the coast, were forwarded to the legislature, praying that body to exert their authority to protect the citizens in their constitutional rights and privileges, and suggesting the expediency of appointing delegates "to meet delegates from such other states as might think proper to appoint them, for the purpose of devising proper measures to procure the united efforts of the commercial states, to obtain such amendments and explanations of the constitution as will secure them from further evils."

These memorials were referred to a joint committee of the senate and house of representatives in Massachusetts, who, although approving of the sentiments of the memorials, reported against the expediency of the proposed convention at that time. The legislature adopted this report in February, 1814, but in October following, resolutions in favor of the convention were adopted, by large majorities, and twelve delegates were appointed, by a vote of 226 to 67, in a convention of both houses of the legislature.

A circular was addressed to the executive magistrates of the other states, to be laid before their respective legislatures, inviting them to appoint delegates to the proposed convention, if they should deem it expedient, and stating the objects of the conference to be to deliberate upon the dangers to which the eastern section was exposed by the course of the war, and to devise, if practicable, means of security and defence which might be consistent with the preservation of their resources from total ruin, and not repugnant to their obligations as members of the Union. It was proposed also, that the convention should deliberate on the subject of amending the constitution of the United States, or of calling a national convention of all the states to effect such amendments as might secure to them equal advantage.

The legislatures of Connecticut and Rhode Island responded to the call, at their October sessions, and appointed delegates, the former seven, the latter four, to meet at Hartford on the 15th of December, 1814. The convention assembled at the time appointed, and consisted of twenty-six delegates, of whom three were appointed by local conventions in New Hampshire and Vermont. The proceedings took place with closed doors, but the journal was afterward made public. The convention embodied their views in a report, which was immediately published and extensively circulated. It was a statement of grievances, many of which were real, but which necessarily arose out of a state of war, a recommendation of several amendments to the constitution, and, if circumstances required, a suggestion of another convention, to be held at Boston in June, 1815. As the news of peace arrived soon after the convention adjourned, the causes of disquiet were removed; but as the delegates were all of the federal party, the convention, before and after their meeting, was denounced in the severest terms, by the friends of the administration, as being treasonable to the general government, and the name of the "Hartford convention" became with the democratic party a term of reproach.

Congress had been adjourned to meet on the last Monday of October, but was convened on the 19th of September, 1814, by a special call of the president, and continued in session until the expiration of their term, on the 3d of March, 1815. The great changes in Europe, and the aspect of affairs in the United States, rendered an early meeting of Congress very important. At an early day in the session the president laid before Congress the instructions which had been given the American commissioners appointed to negotiate a treaty of peace, and the correspondence which had taken place on the subject. The commissioners had assembled at Ghent in the month of August, 1814; those appointed by the government of Great Britain, were Lord Gambier, Mr. H. Goulburn, and Mr. Wm. Adams.

By the documents submitted to Congress, it appeared that new terms were proposed, and authority given the American envoys to make peace, without insisting on all the claims and principles before advanced. The spirit and tone of the president's message at this time, were very different from his former communications to Congress. A desire for peace was strongly expressed, and a disposition fully manifested to represent the views of the British cabinet as less hostile than had been formerly stated. He remarked, that "the repeal of the orders in council, and the general pacification in Europe, which withdrew the occasion on which impressments on American vessels were practised, lead to an expectation that peace and amity may be established."

In one of the earliest communications from the commissioners of the United States to those of Great Britain, when the negotiations opened at Ghent, and which was dated the 24th of August, 1814, it is said: "The causes of the war between the United States and Great Britain having disappeared, by the maritime pacification of Europe, the government of the United States does not desire to continue it in defence of abstract principles, which have, for the present, ceased to have any practical effect.

The undersigned have been accordingly instructed to agree to its termination, both parties restoring whatever they may have taken, and both resuming all their rights, in relation to their respective seamen." In the instructions previously given to the commissioners, dated June 27, 1814, the secretary of state, Mr. Monroe said: "On mature consideration, it has been decided, that under all the circumstances above alluded to, incident to a prosecution of the war, you may omit any stipulation on the subject of impressment, if found indispensably necessary to terminate it."

The British commissioners at Ghent, finding the American government anxious for peace, were at first extravagant in their demands, in the points stated as the basis of negotiation. The despatches from the American envoys which were published in October, 1814, gave but little hopes of peace, and the demands of the British government, as understood from their agents at Ghent, excited a feeling of general indignation throughout the Union. Not an individual in the United States, however decidedly he might originally have been opposed to the declaration of war, and to the policy and measures of the administration, could fail of rejecting such extravagant demands as the basis of a treaty of peace. Overlooking what had passed, there was a general determination to resist such a requisition, at every hazard. The demands of the British were, that the Indians should be included in the pacification, and a territory set apart for them, to remain as a permanent barrier between our western settlements and the adjacent British provinces; and that the United States should thereafter keep no armed naval force on the western lakes, nor erect any fortified or military post or establishment on the shores of those lakes, nor maintain those which already existed.

The negotiations between the British and American commissioners related almost exclusively to subjects which had no connexion with the causes of the war. The declaration of war was founded on the orders in council and impressment. The former were repealed within a week from the date of the declaration of war, leaving nothing to contend about but impressment; and the secretary of state, in a letter to the commissioners dated August 11, 1814, said: "It is presumed that either in the mode suggested in my letter of the 25th of June (to refer the matter to a separate negotiation), which is much preferred, or by permitting the treaty to be silent on the subject, as is authorized in the letter of the 27th of June, the question of impressment may be so disposed of as to form no obstacle to a pacification."

The new questions started by the British commissioners, it was seen, rendered the event of peace uncertain as to time, and preparations were made to continue the war with renewed vigor. Various acts of Congress were passed to increase the regular army, and to accept the service of state troops for local defence. The public debt having increased to a vast amount, it was found necessary, even with some probability of a speedy peace, to increase the taxes in various ways. A new direct tax of six millions was laid ; the rate of postage on letters by mail was increased fifty per cent. ; duties on sales at auction, on licenses to retail liquors, on distilled spirits, on pleasure carriages, on household furniture, and on watches, were increased ; and new duties laid on wares and merchandise manufactured in the United States. These measures were opposed with great earnestness in Congress, especially the bill for six millions of direct taxes. Complaints on this subject were everywhere heard among the people, and increased the general anxiety for peace. A bill was before Congress for several weeks, in November and December, for authorizing the president, on the refusal of the governor of any state to call out the militia when requested, to order subordinate militia officers immediately to march their men as might be directed by the officers of the regular army. It was approved by a majority in the house, but was lost in the senate, after a long debate, by a single vote. The objection to the bill was, that it was in violation of the rights of the militia, and wholly unauthorized by the constitution. One section of the bill also provided for draughting the militia, when they did not voluntarily enlist. The most powerful argument against it, was its direct interference with the privileges of the citizens enrolled in the militia, who were recognised to be so, even by the federal constitution.*

Mr. Monroe, then acting secretary of war, made a report, on the 17th of October, on the subject of filling the ranks of the army, in which he expressed the opinion that it would be necessary to bring into the field, at the next campaign, not less than 100,000 regular troops ; to provide for which he proposed that the free male population of the United States be formed into classes of one hundred men each, and each class to furnish a certain number of men for the war, and replace them in the event of casualty, or if any class proved delinquent, the men to be raised by draught on the whole class. The bounty in money allowed to each recruit to be paid to each draught by all the inhabitants within the precinct of the class within which the draught may be made, equally according to property possessed.

This plan was considered a conscription, intended to be equally efficacious with the conscription established in France by Bonaparte. It was opposed as unconstitutional, oppressive, and absurd, and when modified and introduced in the senate, by Mr. Giles, in the form of a bill for raising eighty thousand men, after a long debate, and great efforts by the friends of the administration, the measure could not be carried through Congress, and of course failed.

The secretary of the navy also made a report at the same session, recommending a register and classification of the seamen of the United States, for the purpose of calling them into the public service in succession, as occasion might require; in other words, to establish by law what even in Great Britain has never had any higher sanction than that of practice, viz., a system of impressment.

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* Bradford.

At the same time that plans of conscription and impressment were thus recommended, a bill was introduced into the senate, making further provisions for filling the ranks of the army, which authorized recruiting officers to enlist any free effective able-bodied men, between the age of eighteen and fifty years, and repealed so much of former acts as required the consent in writing of the parent, master, or guardian, to authorize the enlistment of persons under twenty-one years of age. This measure excited great alarm and much feeling in many parts of the country. It was considered as aiming a direct blow at the legislative prerogatives of the several states, as, by the laws of the states, parents have an absolute right to the services of their children while they are minors, and the constitution contains no authority for Congress to interfere in the private concerns of individuals under the jurisdiction of the several states. The legislature of Connecticut being in session when these plans of conscription and enlisting minors were proposed, passed resolutions, nearly unanimously, expressive of their determination to resist them, if adopted by Congress in the form of a law. Fortunately these measures, which were justified by the friends of the administration on the ground that the public exigency required their adoption, were rendered unnecessary by the change of circumstances produced by the return of peace.

Several changes in the cabinet and other principal officers of government, took place in 1814 and 1815. The office of secretary of the treasury being declared vacant by the senate, in consequence of the absence of Mr. Gallatin, as one of the commissioners to negotiate a treaty of peace, George W. Campbell, of Tennessee, was appointed secretary of that department, on the 9th of February, 1814. Ill health compelled Mr. Campbell to resign in September, and Alexander J. Dallas was appointed secretary of the treasury, October 6, 1814. General Armstrong resigned as secretary of war, in September, 1814, and Mr. Monroe, secretary of state, acted as secretary of war until February 28, 1815, when he was recommissioned as secretary of state. William H. Crawford, who had been appointed minister to France on the 9th of April, 1813, on his return from that mission was appointed secretary of war, August 1, 1815. On the 19th of December, 1814, Benjamin W. Crowninshield, of Massachusetts, was appointed secretary of the navy, in place of William Jones, resigned. Gideon Granger, who had held the office of postmaster-general more than twelve years, was removed by Mr. Madison, and Return Jonathan Meigs (governor of Ohio), appointed in his place, on the 17th of March, 1814. Richard Rush, of Pennsylvania, was appointed attorney-general, in place of William Pinkney, resigned, February 10, 1814. Jonathan Russell was nominated as minister to Sweden, and, after some de-received, being less than three weeks, was occupied by Congress in adapting the affairs of the government and country to a condition of peace. The army was reduced to a peace establishment of ten thousand men, and various acts concerning the acceptance of the services of volunteers and state troops, the flotilla service, and non-intercourse, were repealed. The naval establishment, however, was kept up, and an act passed for the protection of American commerce against Algerine cruisers, by authorizing the president to send a squadron to the Mediterranean. Direct taxes were continued, and one hundred thousand dollars was appropriated for the Cumberland road. A resolution was passed requesting the president to recommend a day of thanksgiving for the blessing of peace.

The total expenditures by the United States government during the war, may be stated, in round numbers, at one hundred millions of dollars; and the loss of lives by battles and other casualties incident to the war, has been estimated at thirty thousand persons. The cost of the war and loss of life by the British nation, were much greater. But the greatest disparity in the contest between the two nations was shown in its effects on the ocean. During the short period of less than three years which the war lasted, the Americans captured, on the ocean and lakes, 56 British vessels-of-war, mounting 886 cannon; and 2,360 merchant-vessels, mounting 8,000 guns; of which 345 were ships, 610 brigs, 520 schooners, 135 sloops, and 750 vessels of various classes taken by the Americans and recaptured by the enemy; making altogether 2,416 vessels, with their cargoes, specie, stores, provisions, and equipments, and about thirty thousand prisoners-of-war. Most of these prizes were taken by American privateers, and many of the vessels which could not be brought into port were either burnt or sunk. The number of merchant-vessels which arrived in port or were destroyed, was 1610. Besides this destruction and capture of British property, there were lost by wreck or otherwise, on the American coast, during the war, twenty-nine British ships-of-war, mounting about 800 guns. The American naval losses by British capture were three frigates, viz., the Chesapeake, Essex, and President, two sloops-of-war, six brigs, and fourteen smaller vessels and gunboats, amounting in all to no more than twenty-five vessels-of-war, carrying a total of 350 guns; while the number of American privateers and merchant-vessels captured by the English, although large, was much less than the British loss of similar vessels already stated. The statement of British captures of American vessels, reported by the admiralty office to the house of commons, on the 1st of February, 1815, gives a total of 1,407 merchant-vessels taken or destroyed, exclusive of captures by British privateers, and 20,961 American seamen prisoners-of-war.* The Americans lost during the war, in addition to the above vessels belonging to the navy, the frigate Adams, in Penobscot river, and a new frigate and brig at Washington city, which were destroyed to prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands. The new sloop-of-war Wasp was lost at sea sometime after capturing the British sloops-of-war Reindeer and Avon, in different actions.

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* Niles's Register, vol. ix., p. 325.

In May, 1815, a squadron of nine vessels of the American navy, under Commodore Decatur, sailed for the Mediterranean, for the purpose of punishing the Algerines for their depredations on American commerce; that piratical nation having taken advantage of the war with Great Britain to plunder American vessels, and condemn their crews to slavery. notwithstanding the annual tribute of 23,000 dollars which had been paid their government by the United States, for the preservation of peace, from 1795 to 1812. On the 17th of June the new frigate Guerriere, commanded by Commodore Decatur, fell in with and captured the Algerine frigate Magouda, of 46 guns, after a running fight of twenty minutes, killing 30 men, among whom was the admiral of the fleet, and taking more than 400 prisoners. A piratical brig of 22 guns, with 180 men, was afterward taken, by other vessels of the United States squadron. The American fleet soon appeared before Algiers, when the Algerine vessels-of-war were at sea, and Commodore Decatur dictated such terms as he pleased to the dey, who, on the 30th of June, concluded a treaty with the United States. The terms were of course honorable to the Americans. No tribute was in future to be paid by the United States; all American captives were to be released without ransom, and compensation was made for such vessels and property as had been taken.

The fourteenth Congress held their first session at Washington, from the 4th of December, 1815, to the 30th of April, 1816. The state of parties was similar to that of the thirteenth Congress, the democratic majority in the house being slightly increased, and amounting to about fifty over the federalists. Most of the members had been elected during the war, and the old party distinctions were not long kept up after this period. Mr. Clay, having returned from negotiating the treaty of peace at Ghent, was again returned to the house of representatives by his former constituents of Kentucky, and for the second time he was elected speaker. He received 87 votes, against 32 for other candidates, of which only 10 were given for federalists, although 65 of that party had been elected to the house. This showed that the return of peace had removed any inducement to an organized opposition to the administration. Mr. Gaillard was again elected president of the senate *pro tem.*

At this session, after an able debate on the subject of the direct tax imposed during the war, in which Mr. Clay, the speaker, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Hopkinson, and other members participated, and in which the whole policy of the war and the conditions of peace were reviewed, a reduction of a portion of the taxes and duties of various kinds was made. The additional rates of postage were abolished, and new rates established; the duties on domestic manufactures, on gold, silver, jewelry, and distilled lay, confirmed by the senate on the 18th of January, 1814; at the same time he was confirmed as one of the commissioners to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain. Some of these changes, and those formerly noticed, during the administration of Mr. Madison, occurred in consequence of dissensions and dissatisfaction among the leaders of the democratic party, in Congress and in the cabinet. Mr. Ingersoll says: "Madison was thwarted by a jealous senate. In May, 1813, when he nominated Jonathan Russell as minister to Sweden, the appointment was negatived by the senate on frivolous pretences largely set forth in publications on the subject by William B. Giles, one of the Virginia senators. In November of that year, Mr. De Kantzow arrived at Washington, and then at last Mr. Russell was suffered to pass the senate. The postmaster-general, Granger, was so inimical to Madison, that he found it necessary, in 1814, to remove him from office. The war of 1812, especially as respected the appointing power of the executive, both at home and for foreign service, was much embarrassed and annoyed by members of the war party, whose constituent states supported Madison's administration."

While Congress was passing acts for the vigorous prosecution of the war, the unexpected and welcome intelligence of peace was received at Washington, early in February, 1815. A treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain was concluded by the commissioners, at Ghent, on the 24th of December, 1814, and, as soon as communicated by the president, was ratified by the senate. It was the occasion of sincere and universal rejoicing, with the exception, perhaps, of contractors, office-holders, and others, who were making great gains by the war, and of course were interested in its continuance. To the administration it was an inexpressible relief; for difficulties and embarrassments had been long gathering and thickening around it. And the people were happy to learn the restoration of peace, the revival of commercial enterprise, and the prospect of a diminution of taxes in future. On the subject of impressment the treaty was silent, and commercial regulations between England and America were referred to negotiations proposed to be resumed at an early day.

A convention was held in London, as proposed at Ghent, early in 1815, to form a commercial treaty. The American commissioners were Messrs. Adams, Gallatin, and Clay; and a treaty was prepared by them and three commissioners on the part of Great Britain, in July, which was soon after ratified by both the contracting parties, to continue for four years. This convention was strictly and almost exclusively of a commercial character; the subject of impressments and of blockades not being noticed by it. And it purported to place the commercial intercourse between the two countries on a perfect reciprocity. In the opinion of most commercial men, the terms of this convention were not more favorable to the maritime rights and interests of the United States, than those of the treaty made in 1794, by Mr. Jay; or that signed by the American envoys, Monroe and Pinkney, in 1807, which was rejected by President Jefferson without submitting it to the senate.*

Although the immediate effect of the war was in many respects disastrous to the interests of the great body of the people, causing much pecuniary and other distress, and the loss of thousands of valuable lives; also retarding the national prosperity; yet it was not without its advantages, in the salutary results which flowed from the circumstances of this great national event. The restrictive measures of Mr. Jefferson's administration, the reduction of the army and navy, as recommended by that president, and the submission of the United States to the long-continued wrongs and insults of France and Great Britain, had excited throughout Europe a contempt for the American character. There existed a general impression among civilized nations, that the spirit of liberty and independence which had carried America triumphantly through the war of the revolution, was extinguished by a love of gain and commercial enterprise, without courage and resolution sufficient to sustain the national rights. But the war with England dissipated this impression, and inspired respect for a nation that gave so many proofs of ability to cope with the mistress of the seas on her favorite element. The national character, therefore, rose to an eminence in the estimation of foreigners which has ever since been maintained. From the era of the war we may date the origin, or the more rapid growth, of the principal branches of domestic manufactures. Another advantage which accrued from the war, was the impulse given to the spirit of internal improvement, which was forcibly impressed upon the minds of the people from witnessing the disadvantages of the imperfect modes of transportation in existence during that period, before a system of canals, railroads, and other improvements, was in operation. The policy of a standing army and of a navy, adequate to the national defence, has likewise been cherished by the people since the importance of both was proved during the war.

In consequence of the deranged state of the currency and the public credit, the secretary of the treasury, in October, 1814, recommended to Congress the establishment of a national bank. A bill to that effect was accordingly introduced, and passed both houses in January, but was vetoed by the president.

On the 23d of November, 1814, the vice-president of the United States, Elbridge Gerry, died suddenly, while on his way to the capitol in his carriage, having the day before presided in the senate during the whole of a long debate. John Gaillard, of South Carolina, was appointed president of the senate *pro tempore*.

The time which remained of the session after the news of peace was spirits, were also abolished or reduced. The direct tax was fixed at three millions, instead of six millions required by a former law. A new tariff of duties on importations was laid, in which the intention was expressed by Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Clay, Mr. Lowndes, and others, to establish a system of protection for American manufactures. The rates fixed were, however, insufficient for that object with regard to many manufactures which had been built up during the war, and were soon prostrated in consequence of the excessive importations of foreign manufactures which took place after the return of peace.

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* Bradford.

Acts were also passed at this session for the gradual increase of the navy; for regulating the rates of foreign coins, and the currency of the United States; for building lighthouses; authorizing the surveying and making a road in Illinois territory; increasing the pay of customhouse officers fifty per cent.; and fixing the pay of members of Congress at fifteen hundred dollars per annum, in lieu of the allowance per diem, as formerly established; but this last law proved to be very unpopular, and was repealed at the next session.

A national bank was incorporated by Congress in April, 1816, with a capital of thirty-five millions of dollars, to continue for twenty years. Although the president had returned with his veto a bill incorporating a bank, passed by the thirteenth Congress, from objections to some of the clauses, he was anxious for the establishment of such an institution; both he and Mr. Clay, the speaker, with others, having changed their views from the experience of the government, during the recent war, which had evinced the want of a national currency. The bill now passed encountered a strong opposition, but received the support of a majority of the democratic party in both houses of Congress, with a portion of the federalists, and it was promptly signed by the president.

The annual sum of two hundred thousand dollars was appropriated for providing arms and military equipments for the militia; acts for the relief of purchasers and settlers on the public lands were also passed, and those of the latter who had not paid for the lands were enabled to obtain titles on payment of a small sum, and causing the same to be registered in the public land office. A system of drawbacks on sugar refined, and spirits distilled from molasses, was adopted; and an important resolution was passed directing the secretary of the treasury to take measures to cause the revenue to be collected and paid in the legal currency of the United States, or treasury-notes, or notes of the new national bank, or in notes of specie-paying banks. The people of Indiana territory were authorized to form a constitution and state government, preparatory to being admitted into the Union. An act passed on the 1st of March, 1816, to give effect to the convention for regulating commerce with England, and repealed all former acts discriminating in favor of goods imported in American vessels over British vessels. An attempt was made in the house to alter the term of the treaty which had been ratified by the senate, but finally, after a long debate, the house yielded, and passed the bill on the subject which had been adopted by the senate.

The relations of the United States with Spain were again brought under discussion in 1816. The Spanish minister at Washington, as instructed, remonstrated against the claims and occupancy of West Florida by the United States. It was claimed by our government as a part of Louisiana, and five years before they had taken possession of part of the disputed territory, but on the united remonstrance of Spain and France, the American troops were withdrawn. The government of the United States never gave up its claim, and had again occupied a portion of the territory by an armed force. The Spanish minister insisted that this occupancy should be no longer held until negotiations could be had. He also demanded that no intercourse should be allowed between the United States and Mexico, which province was then in a state of revolt. The secretary of state, Mr. Monroe, in reply to the Spanish minister, did not directly impugn the claim of Spain to West Florida, but represented that as it was now separated from the Mexican territory, it was of but little advantage to the Spanish nation, and an exchange of Florida for a part of Louisiana bordering on Texas was suggested. The minister was informed that the United States would preserve a strict neutrality between Spain and her revolted colonies. The question of the boundary of Louisiana was also discussed, but no definite result was arrived at by this correspondence, and a settlement with Spain was reserved for the next administration.

The democratic members of the fourteenth Congress, before the adjournment of the first session, held a caucus for the nomination of a candidate for president, as successor to Mr. Madison, also for vice-president. An attempt was made in the caucus to declare such nomination by members of Congress inexpedient, but it was unsuccessful. It was understood that Mr. Madison and his confidential friends preferred Mr. Monroe to any other candidate to succeed him. Several plans and intrigues were set on foot to defeat this nomination, particularly by those republicans who were opposed to Virginia influence, which state had already given presidents to the Union for twenty-four out of the twenty-eight years during the existence of the government.

Colonel Aaron Burr, who then resided in New York, wrote to his son-in-law, Joseph Alston, ex-governor of South Carolina, on the 20th of November, 1815, informing him that a congressional caucus would soon nominate James Monroe for president of the United States. After denouncing Mr. Monroe as an improper and incompetent candidate, the manner of the nomination as equally exceptionable, and the Virginia domination as odious, Colonel Burr urges upon Governor Alston to take measures to break down the system, by "a respectable nomination of General *Andrew Jackson*, before the proclamation of the Virginia caucus, and Jackson's success," he adds, "is inevitable." Governor Alston fully coincided with Colonel Burr in sentiment, but ill health, and grief from family afflictions, prevented his attention to the suggestion.

Governor Tompkins, of New York, had rendered important services and support to the administration and the country during the war. When Mr. Monroe was called to act as secretary of war, in place of General Armstrong, Mr. Madison proposed to Governor Tompkins that Monroe should vacate the office of secretary of state, and that he (Tompkins) should be placed at the head of that department. Although Governor Tompkins felt it his duty to decline the office, alleging as a reason, that he could render more service to the nation as governor of New York, than as a member of the cabinet, he considered that, according to the precedent which had been established, this offer was a commitment on the part of the administration to support him for the next president. The democratic members of the legislature of New York, in February, 1816, instructed their members in Congress to sustain the claims of Tompkins, but it was soon ascertained by those members of Congress that his nomination could not be effected.

The opposition to Mr. Monroe's nomination was finally concentrated on William H. Crawford, of Georgia. He was a native of Virginia, but in early life had emigrated to Georgia, which state he ably represented in the senate, from 1807 to 1813. Although attached to the democratic party, he advocated the recharter of the first bank of the United States, in 1810, and afterward became dissatisfied with what he deemed the indecisive course of Mr. Madison with regard to the difficulties with Great Britain. He voted for the declaration of war, and during the war he was appointed minister to France; on his return thence, he took charge of the war department, as secretary. His friends claimed for him the character of a man of superior intellect and talents, strictly honorable in his political course, and possessing much independence and decision as a statesman.

Every effort having been made by the friends of the two candidates to secure the nomination, the congressional caucus was held on the 16th of March, 1816, and on the ballot for a candidate for president, James Monroe received 65 votes, and William H. Crawford 54; consequently James Monroe was nominated for president. Daniel D. Tompkins received the nomination for vice-president, by 85 votes, against 30 for Simon Snyder, governor of Pennsylvania.

When the election came on, toward the close of the year 1816, Monroe and Tompkins received 183 electoral votes for president and vice-president, and 34 electoral votes were given by the federal party to Rufus King for president, and to several persons for vice-president.

The views of Mr. Madison on subjects of national policy, as developed in his last annual message to Congress, which met on the 2d of December, 1816, and continued until the close of his administration, were considered liberal and important to the interests of the country.

The most important acts passed at this second session of the fourteenth Congress, were as follows :—

An act was passed to provide for paying off the national debt, which at this time exceeded one hundred and twenty millions of dollars, by annual instalments of ten millions. Mr. Lowndes, one of the most able statesmen of South Carolina, and chairman of the committee of ways and means in the house, was the author of this measure, under the operations of which the national debt was finally extinguished. A law was enacted authorizing the secretary of the navy, under the direction of the president, to cause a survey of those public lands which produced live oak and red cedar timber, to be reserved and appropriated for the use of the navy. The navigation laws were revised, so as to give further advantages to vessels of the United States, and no goods or merchandise were allowed to be imported from foreign ports except in American bottoms, or in such foreign vessels as belonged to the country of which the goods were the subject or manufacture. Acts were also passed for the regulation of territories of the United States, by which each of them was allowed to send one delegate to Congress, who should have a right to take part in debate in the house of representatives, but not of voting ; for establishing a separate territory by the name of Alabama ; to preserve more effectually the neutral relations of the United States ; to fix the peace establishment of the marine corps at eight hundred men, including officers ; providing for the location of the lands reserved for the Creek Indians ; for the punishment of crimes and offences committed within the Indian boundaries ; and for the relief of persons imprisoned for debts due to the United States. The state of Indiana having formed a constitution, in conformity to act of Congress, was by joint resolution admitted into the Union on the 11th of December, 1816. The people of the western part of Mississippi territory were authorized to form a constitution, preparatory to admission into the Union as a state.

A bill appropriating the bonus which the United States bank was to pay the government for their charter, to purposes of internal improvement, was passed by both houses, at this session, after an able and full discussion of the constitutionality and expediency of a system of internal improvements by the general government ; but was returned to Congress by the president, with his objections, which involved constitutional scruples, and consequently the measure failed to become a law.

The administration of President Madison terminated on the 3d of March, 1817, and he surrendered the affairs of the government into the hands of his friend and associate, Mr. Monroe, with the satisfaction of having seen the nation pass honorably through the trying scenes of a portion of the time while he had been at the head of the republic ; and that he could now retire from the cares of office at a time of general peace and prosperity, with the prospect for his country of a bright and glorious career in her destiny as a great and independent nation.

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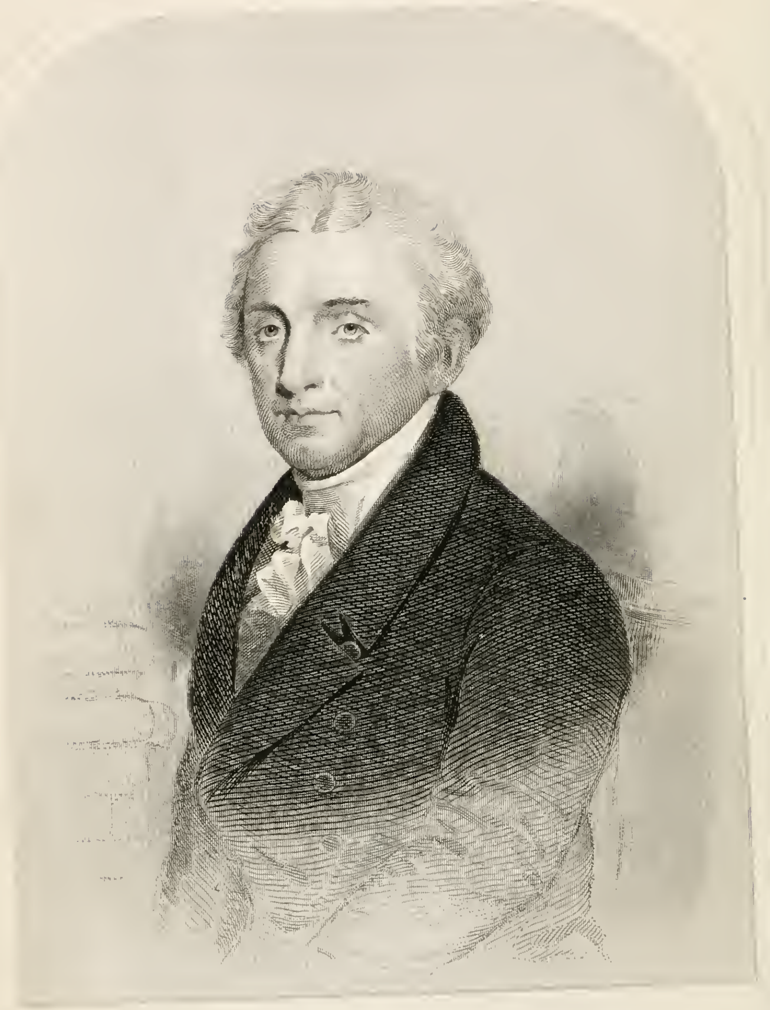

James Monroe

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JAMES MONROE.

THE family of Monroe is one of the most ancient and honorable among the early settlers of Virginia. It is remarkable that the tide water section of that state has produced four of the first five presidents of the United States; Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, having been born in that part of Virginia, and within a few miles of each other. The same section of country, it may be added, was honored also as the birthplace of the biographer of Washington, who for many years was the ornament of the supreme court of the United States—Chief-Justice Marshall.

The fifth president of the United States, James Monroe, was born on the 2d of April, 1759, in the county of Westmoreland, Virginia. His parents were Spence Monroe and Elizabeth Jones, both members of old and highly respectable families in the ancient dominion. His early youth was passed in the midst of that exciting contest which led to the American revolution; the stamp act being passed in the sixth year of his age. He was thus educated in the detestation of tyranny, and prompted by a patriotism which went beyond his years, he left the college of William and Mary, where he was pursuing collegiate studies, to join the standard of his country, in the 18th year of his age. The declaration of independence had just been issued, and at that disastrous moment when Washington was preparing to defend New York, against the increasing armies of England; when the timid and wavering were sinking from the side of their country's chief, James Monroe arrived at headquarters, with a firm determination to share her fate, whether for good or for evil.*

During the gloomy year of 1776, he shared with the army their defeats and their privations; was present at the disastrous battles of Harlem heights and Whiteplains; and in the battle of Trenton, while leading the vanguard, he received a wound, the scar of which he carried to his grave. After recovering from his wound, he was promoted for his gallantry, to the rank of a captain of infantry, and returned to active service. During the campaigns of 1777 and 1778, he acted as aid to Lord Stirling, and by accepting this place in the staff of that general, he receded from the line of promotion; but in that capacity he distinguished himself in the actions of Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth. Becoming desirous to regain his position in the line of the army, he endeavored to raise a regiment of Virginia troops, under the recommendation of General Washington, and the authority of the legislature. In this he failed, owing to the exhausted state of the country. He therefore devoted himself to the study of the law, under the direction of Mr. Jefferson, who was then governor of the state. He occasionally acted as a volunteer in repelling the invasions with which Virginia was afterward visited; and after the fall of Charleston, in 1780, he repaired to the southern army, as a military commissioner, to collect information as to its ability to rescue that portion of the Union from the enemy. This duty was performed to the satisfaction of the governor, by whom he was appointed.

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* For a part of this sketch we are indebted to the American Annual Register, vol. vi., published in 1832.

He now commenced his career in the legislative councils of his country, being elected in 1782, by the county of King George, a member of the legislature of Virginia, and by that body shortly after chosen a member of the executive council. He was then only in his twenty-fourth year, but appears to have evinced sufficient tact in legislation to induce the legislature to elect him the following year one of the delegates to represent the state in the continental Congress. He took his seat in that body on the 13th of December, just in time to be present at Annapolis when Washington surrendered his commission into the hands of the authority by whom he had been appointed. From that time until 1786, Mr. Monroe continued to represent his native state in Congress, and became entirely convinced of the inefficiency of that body to govern the country under the articles of confederation. He accordingly sought an extension of its powers, and in 1785 moved to invest Congress with the power of regulating trade. This resolution, together with another in favor of investing it with the power of levying an impost duty of five per cent., were referred to a committee, of which Mr. Monroe was chairman.

A report was made, which combined both the objects, and proposed such alterations in the articles of confederation as were necessary to vest in Congress the powers required. These were among the steps which led to the convention at Annapolis, and consequently to the formation and adoption of the federal constitution. Mr. Monroe was also active and influential in devising a system for disposing of and settling the public lands, and warmly opposed the plan of selling each range of townships separately, before any other should be offered for sale.

On the 24th of December, 1784, Mr. Monroe was appointed, with eight other highly distinguished men of that period, members of a federal court, to decide the long pending controversy between Massachusetts and New York. He accepted of the appointment, but on the 15th of May, 1786, he resigned his commission, and the two states having, during the same year, adjusted the matter by mutual agreement, the court never met.

Mr. Monroe differed from both New York and Massachusetts on the question of relinquishing our right to navigate the Mississippi river, as demanded by Spain and assented to by the northern states. The southern states opposed the relinquishment of this right, and Mr. Monroe took a leading part against any concession to Spain.

While attending the continental Congress, as a member, at New York, Mr. Monroe married Miss Kortright, daughter of Mr. L. Kortright, of that city. This lady had been celebrated in the fashionable circles of London and Paris for her beauty and accomplishments, and in married life she was exemplary, as well as an ornament to the society in which she was called to act during the scenes of her husband's subsequent career.

Toward the conclusion of the year 1786, Mr. Monroe's term of service in Congress expired, and, by the rule then adopted, being ineligible for a second term, he established himself at Fredericksburg, with the view of practising law. He was soon, however, again called from the pursuits of private life, by being elected a member of the legislature, and the following year, 1788, he was chosen a delegate to the state convention, assembled to decide upon the adoption of the federal constitution.

Notwithstanding Mr. Monroe was convinced of the inefficiency of the articles of confederation, and of the necessity of a radical change in the government of the Union, he was not altogether prepared to adopt the federal constitution, as framed by the convention of 1787. He thought that certain amendments ought to be made previous to its adoption, and decidedly advocated that course in the convention. We have already stated, in the memoir of Mr. Madison, that the leading men of Virginia in the state convention, were much divided on the question of the adoption of the constitution. Among those who opposed it in that body, besides Mr. Monroe, were Patrick Henry, George Mason, and William Grayson, while its most powerful advocates were James Madison, John Marshall, Edmund Randolph, and Edmund Pendleton. The convention finally adopted the constitution as it was, by a vote of 89 to 79, Mr. Monroe being among the negatives; certain amendments were at the same time recommended for the adoption of the states, instead of being insisted on previous to the acceptance of the constitution.

The course which Mr. Monroe pursued on this occasion was acceptable to the state of Virginia, as was proved by the election of a majority of anti-federalists to Congress, including the two senators; and on the death of Mr. Grayson, one of the latter, Mr. Monroe was chosen to the senate of the United States in his place, and took his seat in that body in 1790. In this station he continued until 1794, acting with the anti-federal party in opposition to Washington's administration, as did Mr. Madison and most of the Virginia delegation in Congress. The French republican government having requested the recall of Gouverneur Morris, American minister to France, General Washington complied with their wishes, as also those of the democratic party in Congress, and appointed Mr. Monroe the successor of Mr. Morris, in May, 1794. He was received with distinguished favor in France by the government and people, but the course he pursued during his residence at the capital of that republic was not conformable to the views of neutrality entertained by General Washington, who therefore recalled him in 1796, and sent Charles Cotesworth Pinckney in his place.

On his return to the United States, Mr Monroe published a volume in explanation of his views and proceedings relative to his mission to France, vindicating his own course, and censuring the policy of the administration toward the French republic.

He, however, did not cherish any animosity toward General Washington, but at a subsequent period he joined with his countrymen in acknowledging the merits and perfect integrity of that great man. He also did ample justice to the character of John Jay, who negotiated his celebrated treaty with Great Britain about the same time that Mr. Monroe visited France. Although opposed to the treaty made by Mr. Jay, and to his political views generally, Mr. Monroe left on record in his own handwriting, an unqualified testimonial to the pure patriotism, the pre-eminent ability, and the spotless integrity of John Jay.

Shortly after his return from France, Mr. Monroe was chosen to the legislature, and in 1799 he was elected by that body governor of Virginia, where he served for the term of three years, then limited by the constitution of the state.

In 1803, President Jefferson appointed Mr. Monroe envoy extraordinary to France, to act jointly with Mr. Livingston, then resident minister at Paris, to negotiate the purchase of New Orleans, or a right of depot for the United States on the Mississippi. He was also associated with Mr. Charles Pinckney, then resident minister at Madrid, to negotiate terms also with Spain relative to Louisiana.

We have, in our notice of Mr. Jefferson's administration, given an account of the purchase of Louisiana by the United States, of France. That country had been ceded by Spain to France, and Mr. Monroe, upon his arrival in France, found a most favorable conjuncture for the accomplishment of the mission, in being enabled to obtain for his country the possession, not only of New Orleans, but of the whole province of Louisiana. The treaty was concluded within a fortnight after the arrival of Mr. Monroe at Paris, and after the conclusion of the negotiation he proceeded to London, where he was also commissioned to act as successor to Mr. Rufus King, who had resigned.

Here he sought to obtain a conventional arrangement for the protection of American seamen against impressment, and for the protection of neutral rights ; but in the midst of these discussions he was called away to the discharge of his mission to Spain.

In the transfer of Louisiana to France by Spain, and to the United States by France, the boundaries of the province were not defined. Spain was encouraged to dispute the extent of the province, and she sought to reduce it to a territory of small dimensions. A controversy arose between the United States and Spain, at one time threatening war, and for the purpose of attempting an adjustment of these difficulties Mr. Monroe proceeded to Madrid. His efforts, joined with those of Mr. Pinckney, were unsuccessful, and the controversy was left unsettled.

Mr. Monroe was then recalled to London to maintain our rights as neutrals, against the systematic encroachment of Great Britain. He was there joined by Mr. William Pinkney, who had then been recently sent from the United States, as minister to England. A whig ministry being then in power in Great Britain, with the friendly feelings of that party toward the United States, Messrs. Monroe and Pinkney were enabled to negotiate a treaty, in 1807, which, although not as favorable as they would have wished, was considered by those envoys as advantageous to the United States. As the treaty was clogged with certain conditions which were deemed by President Jefferson inadmissible, it was not submitted by him to the senate, but sent back to England for revisal. The British cabinet, however, had been changed, and Mr. Canning, the secretary for foreign affairs, refused to resume the negotiation. The mission of Messrs. Monroe and Pinkney was now at an end. Mr. Monroe, after a short detention, in consequence of the difficulty which grew out of the affair of the Chesapeake frigate, returned to the United States in 1807.

For a considerable time Mr. Monroe felt dissatisfied with his friend, President Jefferson, in consequence of his rejection of the treaty with Great Britain without consulting the senate, and also from an impression that the president's influence was exerted in favor of Mr. Madison as his successor to the presidency. Mr. Jefferson, in his correspondence with Mr. Monroe, explained his course with regard to the rejection of the treaty, and declared his intention to remain perfectly neutral between his two friends who were named to succeed him. The Virginia legislature settled their respective claims to the presidency, by deciding in favor of Mr. Madison, in which decision Mr. Monroe and his friends acquiesced.

In 1811 he was again elected governor of Virginia, but continued but a short time in that station, for upon the resignation of Robert Smith, he was appointed by Mr. Madison secretary of state. This office he continued to hold during the remainder of Mr. Madison's administration.

After the capture of Washington city, and the resignation of General Armstrong, Mr. Monroe was appointed to the war department, without, however, resigning as secretary of state. In this station he exhibited a remarkable energy and boldness of character. He found the treasury exhausted, and the public credit prostrated; while the enemy, relieved from his war with France, was preparing to turn his numerous armies, flushed with victory over the legions of Napoleon, against the United States. The first duty of the secretary of war was to prepare for the new campaign, and this he was enabled to do by the now excited spirit of the country. The army already authorized by acts of Congress, if the regiments were full, numbered 60,000 men, which Mr. Monroe proposed to increase by the addition of 40,000, and to levy new recruits by draughting from the whole mass of able-bodied men in the United States. This proposition, which was considered an imitation of the French mode of conscription long practised by Napoleon, and would inevitably have lost him the favor of the people, he felt it to be his duty to make, and had intended, in case of the continuance of the war, to withdraw his name from the presidential canvass. To two or three friends he disclosed his feelings on this occasion, in confidence, and had authorized them to publish his intention of declining a nomination as successor to Mr. Madison, when the conclusion of peace rendered the increase of the army unnecessary, and therefore removed the objections to his being a candidate for president.

Toward the end of the year 1814, Mr. Monroe's attention, as secretary of war, was most urgently called to the defence of New Orleans, against which a powerful fleet and army had been despatched. To raise the funds for the defence of this important point, Mr. Monroe was compelled to pledge his private credit, as subsidiary to that of the government, which then was at a low ebb. By this act of devotion he was enabled to furnish the necessary supplies; New Orleans was successfully defended, and the entire defeat of the British army under General Packenham terminated the war in a manner honorable to the American arms.

A new series of duties now awaited Mr. Monroe. Upon the conclusion of peace he resumed his station in the department of state, and as the long-tried friend and confidential adviser of Mr. Madison, he was called to the arduous task of deciding upon those measures which aimed at the re-establishment of the public credit, and to place the country in a better state of preparation, in case she should be called upon again to assert her rights by an appeal to arms. Our foreign relations, which had been partially suspended during the war, were to be renewed, and the domestic policy of the United States required to be modified so as to adapt it to the great changes which had been produced by the general pacification of Europe. In the performance of the arduous duties imposed upon him at this period, Mr. Monroe had the good fortune to be sustained by public opinion, and with that auxiliary he lent his zealous co-operation to Mr. Madison in establishing the system of internal policy, adopted after the close of the war, and continued it with new and enlarged features after his election as president of the United States, in 1817.

In 1816, Mr. Monroe received the nomination of the democratic party, through their representatives in Congress, for president of the United States. With that party he had uniformly acted, under the various names of anti-federal, democratic, and republican, and by them was he elected, in 1816, chief magistrate of the nation, to succeed Mr. Madison, on the 4th of March, 1817. Previous to entering on the duties of his high office, he was advised by General Jackson, with whom he was on the most friendly terms, to disregard former party divisions in the formation of his cabinet, and to use his influence and power to destroy party spirit, by appointing the best men to office, without regard to their political preferences. This course Mr. Monroe declined to pursue, confining his appointments generally, as did his predecessors Jefferson and Madison, to those who professed his own political faith, and excluding federalists from office, with but few exceptions.

In other respects the policy of Mr. Monroe was liberal and satisfactory to men of all parties, excepting, perhaps, the ardent supporters of a system of internal improvements, who regretted the adherence of the president to a strict construction of the constitution on that subject. On many points the policy of Mr. Monroe's administration resembled that of the federal school established in the early stages of the government under the auspices of Washington and Hamilton. The perfecting of the establishment of a national bank, of the plan for the gradual discharge of the public debt, of the system of fortifying the coast and increasing the navy, and of encouraging by adequate protection the manufactures and arts of the country, formed essential parts of the policy referred to, adopted at the close of Mr. Madison's administration, and continued by that of Mr. Monroe. To these measures Mr. Monroe, finally, after long deliberation, and with the entire concurrence of his whole cabinet, sanctioned by repeated demonstrations of Congress, determined to add a system of internal improvement, thus yielding his own scruples to advance the interests of the nation. This was done on the 30th of April, 1824, when the act appropriating $30,000 for the survey of such routes for canals and public roads as the president might direct, received his sanction.

Among the measures which distinguished the administration of Mr. Monroe, was the negotiation of the treaty which added Florida to the United States. This cession secured to the nation all the territory north of Mexico; and it was negotiated with great propriety by one who had borne so conspicuous a part in the acquisition of Louisiana.

In 1817 the president made a tour through a large portion of the northern and middle states, which elicited a general expression of kindness, respect, and courtesy from the people.

Mr. Monroe was re-elected president in 1820, with more unanimity than any one since Washington, receiving every vote of the electoral colleges of the United States, except one, and ended his career in the service of the federal government on the 3d of March, 1825. He then retired to his residence in Loudon county, Virginia, where he was shortly after appointed a county magistrate, the duties of which office he continued to discharge until his departure for the city of New York. He was also appointed curator of the university of Virginia; and in 1830, having been elected a member of the convention called to revise the constitution of that state, he was unanimously chosen to preside over its deliberations Before the close of its labors, however, he was compelled by severe indisposition to retire, and in the succeeding summer removed to New York, to take up his abode with his son-in-law, Mr. Samuel L. Gouverneur. There he remained, surrounded by filial solicitude and tenderness, until, on the fifty-fifth anniversary of the nation's birth (July 4, 1831), he terminated his earthly career, in the 72d year of his age; furnishing another striking coincidence, which, as in the instance of the simultaneous deaths of Adams and Jefferson, on the same day, five years previous, afforded occasion for grave reflection, and seemed pregnant with some mysterious moral lesson to a nation whose attention was thus forcibly directed to the act which, while it gave it birth as an independent community, also served to mark the commencement of a new era in the history of the world.

Mr. Monroe left only two children, both daughters, one the widow of George Hay, Esq., of Richmond, the other the wife of Samuel L. Gouverneur, Esq., of New York. Mrs. Monroe died but a short time before her venerable husband.

Though in the course of his life he had received from the public treasury, for his services, $358,000, he retired from office deeply in debt. He was, however, relieved at last by the adjustment by Congress of his claims, founded chiefly on the disbursements made during the war.

In his personal appearance Mr. Monroe was tall and well formed, being about six feet in stature, with light complexion, and blue eyes. His countenance had no indications of superior intellect, but an honesty and firmness of purpose which commanded respect, and gained favor and friendship. He was laborious and industrious, and doubtless compensated in some degree by diligence, for slowness of thought and want of imagination. His talents, however, were respectable, and he was a fine specimen of the old school of Virginia gentlemen, generous, hospitable, and devoted to his country, which he did not hesitate to serve to the utmost of his ability, through a long life, and his career was highly honorable, useful, and worthy of admiration.

ADMINISTRATION OF MONROE.

On the fourth of March, 1817, the president elect, James Monroe, accompanied by the vice-president elect, Daniel D. Tompkins, left the residence of the former, attended by a large concourse of citizens on horseback, and marshalled by the gentlemen appointed to that duty, and proceeded to Congress Hall, in Washington city, where the usual ceremonies of inauguration were performed. The ex-president, Mr. Madison, and the judges of the supreme court, were present on the occasion. All entered the chamber of the senate, which body was then in session, and the vice-president took the chair, the oath of office being administered to him, when he delivered a short address.

This ceremony being ended, the senate adjourned, and the president and vice-president, the judges of the supreme court, and the senators present, attended the president to the elevated portico temporarily erected for the occasion, where, in the presence of an immense concourse of citizens and strangers, including the government officers and foreign ministers, he delivered his inaugural address.

Having concluded his address, the oath of office was administered to the president by Chief-Justice Marshall.

The liberal tone of the president's address, and the course of policy indicated by it, gave general satisfaction to citizens of all political opinions, and the commencement of the new administration was hailed as the dawn of an era of good feelings

The individuals selected by the president to form his cabinet, were all of the republican, or democratic school of politics, and distinguished for their ability as statesmen, in various public stations which they had previously held. John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, was appointed secretary of state, William H. Crawford, of Georgia, secretary of the treasury, John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, secretary of war, and William Wirt, of Virginia, attorney-general. The two latter gentlemen were appointed in December, 1817, Mr. Calhoun having been named in place of Governor Isaac Shelby, of Kentucky, who declined the offer of head of the war department, which was first offered to him. Benjamin W. Crowninshield, of Massachusetts, was continued as secretary of the navy (which appointment he had received from Mr. Madison) until November 30, 1818, when Smith Thompson, of New York, was appointed in his place.* Return Jonathan Meigs, of Ohio, was also continued as postmaster-general (not then a cabinet officer), and held that office from March, 1814, until December, 1823, when John M'Lean, of Ohio, succeeded him. The foregoing were the only changes made by Mr. Monroe in the cabinet or heads of departments, in the eight years of his administration, showing greater permanency and harmony in the affairs of the national government, during that period, than at any other time since the adoption of the federal constitution.

During the late war with Great Britain, a practical opportunity was afforded to the government of the United States to discover the relative importance of the defences erected along the frontier, and the strength and utility of the various fortified places on the Atlantic coast. The frequent and sometimes successful incursions of the late enemy, enforced the necessity of selecting new points for the erection of strong and efficient batteries to protect the country against future invasion; of demolishing such works as were thence found to have been constructed in improper situations; and of concentrating the regular forces at such positions as should render their co-operation speedy and effective.

Impressed with the magnitude of this subject, Mr. Monroe had no sooner passed through the forms of inauguration, than he directed his attention to the means by which to accomplish so desirable an object. A mere theoretical knowledge would be insufficient for the consummation of his views; and, indeed, could not be entirely depended upon. Availing himself, therefore, of the experience acquired before the close of the late contest, he determined to engage in a personal examination of the situation, strength, and condition of all the citadels and military posts in the northern and eastern departments of the Union. To the early execution of this intention he was urged, as he himself intimated, by a desire to look into the economical expenditures of the public moneys, which had been liberally appropriated by Congress; to facilitate the completion of these measures; and to ascertain the propriety of adopting plans suggested by the agents employed in the service of fortification.

Taking advantage of a season of comparative leisure, the president left Washington city on the 31st of May, 1817, entered upon his laudable undertaking, and prosecuted his route through all the principal towns and cities which he had marked out for his first tour of observation. Departing from the capital, he passed through Baltimore to the state of Delaware, to the cities of Philadelphia and New York, and the chief towns in Connecticut and Rhode Island, to Boston and other parts of Massachusetts; to the capital and other towns in New Hampshire; and through the province of Maine to Portland. Thence he extended his journey westward through Vermont; inspected the works at Plattsburgh; and passing through the forest to the St. Lawrence, he embarked for Lake Ontario; visited Sackett's Harbor and Fort Niagara; and advancing along the strait to Buffalo, sailed through Lake Erie, and landed at Detroit, the extremity of his tour. He took a direction thence through the woods of the Michigan territory, and through the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, toward the District of Columbia, where he arrived after an absence of more than three months.

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* Dec. 9, 1823, Samuel L. Southard, of N. J., succeeded Mr. Thompson, appointed judge.

The persevering manner in which this long, laborious, and fatiguing journey was performed, are strong and certain indications of its beneficial results.

With an alacrity paralleled only by the prompt aid of the citizens to accelerate his movements, the president inspected garrisons; examined fortifications; reviewed infantry regiments at cantonments; and obtained a knowledge of the condition of the military arsenals and naval depôts along the Atlantic and inland frontiers. To these numerous duties he added the desire to promote the prosperity of the people; to correct abuses in the public offices; to avert the calamities incident to any future period of hostilities; to meliorate the condition of the poorer classes of society; and to unite and harmonize the sentiments and affections of the citizens of one section with those of another. A considerable part of his journey in returning from the northwestern frontier, was through a succession of forests and Indian settlements. He sustained, however, all the inconveniences of comfortless lodgings, and unpleasant and fatiguing travelling, without any abatement of that cheerfulness and sense of public duty manifested in the commencement of his tour, the advantageous results of which will long be remembered and acknowledged by the nation.*

The visit of the president to the principal cities and towns of the middle and eastern states, possessed the charm of novelty, neither Mr. Jefferson nor Mr. Madison having followed the example set by General Washington, during their presidential terms. They, consequently, were personally unknown to the great body of the people. Mr. Monroe was everywhere received with enthusiasm by the people, and honored with civic and military escorts and processions, in the cities, towns, and villages, through which he passed. His ordinary costume on these occasions was the undress uniform formerly worn by officers of the American revolution, namely, a military blue coat of domestic manufacture, light underclothes, and a cocked hat; a becoming taste for a president who had been a soldier of the revolution, and which tended to awaken in the minds of the people the remembrance of the days of Washington. In his reply to an address from the New York society of the Cincinnati, the president said: "The opportunity which my visit to this city has presented of meeting the New York society of the Cincinnati, with many of whom I was well acquainted in our revolution, affords me heartfelt satisfaction. It is impossible to meet any of those patriotic citizens, whose valuable services were

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* Narrative of President's Tour

so intimately connected with that great event, without recollections which it is equally just and honorable to cherish."

To an address of the president of the American Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures, at New York, the president replied, that he duly appreciated the objects of the institution, which were particularly dear to him from their being intimately connected with the real independence of our country; and closed with an assurance that he would use his efforts, as far as the general interest of the country would permit, to promote the patriotic and laudable objects of the society.

The citizens of Kennebunk and its vicinity, in Maine, having in their address alluded to the prospects of a political union among the people, in support of the administration, the president said, in reply: "You are pleased to express a confident hope that a spirit of mutual conciliation may be one of the blessings which may result from my administration. This indeed would be an eminent blessing, and I pray it may be realized. Nothing but union is wanting to make us a great people. The present time affords the happiest presage that this union is fast consummating. It can not be otherwise; I daily see greater proofs of it. The further I advance in my progress in the country, the more I perceive that we are all Americans—that we compose but one family—that our republican institutions will be supported and perpetuated by the united zeal and patriotism of all. Nothing could give me greater satisfaction than to behold a perfect union among ourselves—a union which is necessary to restore to social intercourse its former charms, and to render our happiness, as a nation, unmixed and complete. To promote this desirable result requires no compromise of principle, and I promise to give it my continued attention, and my best endeavors."

No part of his subsequent official conduct contradicted the magnanimous spirit which Mr. Monroe discovered at the commencement of his administration, excepting that he seems to have considered that his duty to the party to which he owed his election, and to which he had been attached through life, required him, in his selections for public office, to confine himself to men professing democracy, and the continued exclusion of federalists from the favor of the national government. The federal party, however, was almost entirely prostrated soon after the peace of 1815, and continued their organization in but few of the states, after a feeble struggle of three or four years. Those who had acted with the party were satisfied with the principles and views generally adopted by the administration of Mr. Monroe; and those who might have sought office, if in the majority, had been so long accustomed to the ban of proscription, that they did not probably complain at being still placed without the pale of governmental favor.

Had the president followed the advice of General Jackson, who, in a correspondence with him preceding and immediately after his election, advised him to select his cabinet without any regard to party, it is not probable that the measures of the administration would have been different from those which were adopted by the recommendations of the cabinet composed of Messrs. Adams, Crawford, Calhoun, Crowninshield, and Wirt. Those gentlemen were all understood, while in the cabinet, to have been in favor of the policy adopted, which was similar to that advocated by the federal party, commencing with the measures of Washington and Hamilton in the organization and early movements of the national government.

General Jackson's advice to Mr. Monroe is contained in a letter to the latter, dated November 12, 1816, when Mr. Monroe was considered the president elect. The following is an extract: "Your happiness and the nation's welfare materially depend upon the selections which are to be made to fill the heads of departments. Everything depends on the selection of your ministry. In every selection, party and party feelings should be avoided. Now is the time to exterminate that *monster* called party spirit. By selecting characters most conspicuous for their probity, virtue, capacity, and firmness, without any regard to party, you will go far to, if not entirely, eradicate those feelings which, on former occasions, threw so many obstacles in the way of government; and perhaps have the *pleasure* and *honor* of uniting a people heretofore politically divided. The chief magistrate of a great and powerful nation should never indulge in party feelings. His conduct should be liberal and disinterested, always bearing in mind that he acts for the *whole* and not a *part* of the community."

The president, in his reply, discusses the subject of parties and appointments at great length, and in the course of his remarks says: "The election of a successor to Mr. Madison has taken place, and a new administration is to commence its service. The election has been made by the republican party, and of a person known to be devoted to that cause. How shall he act? How organize the administration? How fill the vacancies existing at the time?

"The distinction between republicans and federalists, even in the southern, and middle, and western states, has not been fully done away. To give effect to free government, and secure it from future danger, ought not its decided friends, who stood firm in the day of trial, to be principally relied on? Would not the association of any of their opponents in the administration, itself wound their feelings, or, at least, of very many of them, to the injury of the republican cause? Might it not be considered, by the other party, as an offer of compromise with them, which would lessen the ignominy due to the counsels which produced the Hartford convention, and thereby have a tendency to revive that party on its former principles? My impression is, that the administration should rest strongly on the republican party, indulging toward the other a spirit of moderation, and evincing a desire to discriminate between its members, and to bring the whole into the republican fold, as quietly as possible. Many men, very distinguished for their talents, are of opinion that the existence of the federal party is necessary to keep union and order in the republican ranks; that is, that free government can not exist without parties. This is not my opinion. The first object is to save the cause, which can be done by those who are devoted to it only, and of course by keeping them together; or, in other words, by not disgusting them by too hasty an act of liberality to the other party, thereby breaking the generous spirit of the republican party, and keeping alive that of the federal party. The second is, to prevent the reorganization and revival of the federal party, which, if my hypothesis is true, that the existence of party is not necessary to a free government, and the other opinion which I have advanced is well founded, that the great body of the federal party are republican, will not be found impracticable. To accomplish both objects, and thereby exterminate all party divisions in our country, and give new strength and stability to our government, is a great undertaking, not easily executed. I am, nevertheless, decidedly of opinion that it may be done; and should the experiment fail, I shall conclude that its failure was imputable more to the want of a correct knowledge of all circumstances claiming attention, and of sound judgment in the measures adopted, than to any other cause. I agree, I think, perfectly with you, in the grand object, that moderation should be shown to the federal party, and even a generous policy be adopted toward it; the only difference between us seems to be, how far shall that spirit be indulged in the outset; and it is to make you thoroughly acquainted with my views on this highly important subject, that I have written you so freely upon it."*

The first session of the fifteenth Congress commenced on the 1st of December, 1817, and continued until the 20th of April, 1818. The democratic majority in both senate and house was overwhelming, the number of federalists in this Congress being few indeed. And after this period, it may be remarked that former party lines became entirely extinct in the national legislature. Mr. Clay was re-elected speaker of the house of representatives, by a vote nearly unanimous. The vice-president, Daniel D. Tompkins, of course presided in the senate, and in his absence John Gaillard acted as president *pro tem.*

The president's message involved many subjects of great interest to the nation, many of which were taken up and acted upon by Congress. The first act of the session was one to abolish the internal duties imposed during the war, namely, duties on licenses to distillers, on refined sugar, licenses to retailers, sales at auction, on pleasure carriages, and stamps. Most of the measures recommended by the president were approved by a large majority of Congress; and there was much harmony among members of different political views. There was much less crimination and bitterness manifested in debate than had appeared at former sessions of

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* Niles's Register, vol. xxvi., pp. 165, 166.

Congress. The compensation for members of both houses was fixed at eight dollars a day, and eight dollars for every twenty miles' travel; and the act of March, 1816, providing a salary of fifteen hundred dollars per annum for each member was repealed.

An act granting pensions to officers and soldiers of the revolutionary war was passed at this session, in conformity to the suggestion of the president. The law was modified, and in some measure restricted, by an act two years after, which confined the pensions to those who were in destitute circumstances. But, with this modification, the law afforded relief to a great number, not less than thirteen thousand, who had given their personal services and hazarded their lives for the liberties of the country, in the war of the revolution.* This act of justice and equity had been long delayed through the inability of the government, but the feelings of the people were at last strongly expressed in favor of doing something for the benefit of those to whom the country owed so much, and who had never received an adequate compensation for their invaluable services.

An additional act was passed on the subject of the importation of slaves into the United States, which modified, in some particulars, the law of 1807 on the same subject, but did not materially change its prohibitions and penalties. And a law was enacted forbidding the citizens of the United States to engage in any hostile enterprise against the subjects of a government which was on terms of peace and amity with the United States. There were some attempts at that time to introduce slaves into the country through southwestern ports; and an expedition was apprehended to be in preparation to invade the Mexican territory.

The state of Mississippi was, by a resolution of Congress, admitted into the Union on the 10th of December, 1817, and an act was passed in April following, authorizing the people of Illinois territory to form a constitution and state government, preparatory to admission as a state. An act concerning navigation closed the ports of the United States against any British vessel coming from any colony of Great Britain the ports of which were closed against vessels of the United States. This was done as a retaliatory measure, in consequence of the British government having refused to allow a direct trade from the United States to the British West Indies and other American colonies. An act respecting the flag of the United States fixed the number of stripes, alternate red and white, at thirteen, and directed that the Union be represented by stars equal to the number of states, white in a blue field. Three per cent. of the net proceeds of sales of public lands in Indiana was directed to be paid to that state for the purpose of making roads and canals. The duties on certain manufactures, viz., copper, cut-glass, Russia sheetings, iron, nails, and alum, were increased, and the majority in favor of protection to domestic manufactures was large in this Congress. In the senate all but three, and in the house of representatives all but sixteen members, voted for a bill to continue for *seven* years the duty laid in 1816 on imports of cotton and woollen manufactures. That duty, in 1816, was fixed at twenty-five per cent. on cottons and woollens for *three* years, and the minimum value of a square yard of cotton was then fixed at twenty-five cents. Still the amount of protection afforded by the tariff of 1816 to the manufacturers of cottons and woollens, was not found adequate to the purpose, and the excessive importations of foreign manufactured goods for several years after the peace, prostrated numerous American manufacturers, and spread ruin and desolation among the industrious classes, including agriculturists as well as mechanics and manufacturers. The bankruptcies among the mercantile portion of the community were also extensive.

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* Bradford.

The subject of internal improvements by the general government was discussed in Congress at this session. A committee who had the subject under consideration reported, that "the dividends of the United States in the national bank be appropriated to such objects;" but there was a strong opposition to the measure; and after repeated debates, relating principally to the constitutionality of such appropriations, the subject was postponed to a future day. And yet a vote was taken in the house, at one stage of the bill, when there appeared a majority of fifteen in favor of appropriating the public funds for canals, and for military and postroads. The speaker, Mr. Clay, was one of the ablest advocates of internal improvement, but it was understood that the opinion and influence of the president were against the measure.

A motion was made in the house of representatives, when in committee of the whole, by the speaker, Mr. Clay, for a mission to South America, to express the sympathy of the government of the United States for the colonies there which had declared their independence, with a view to enter into friendly political relations with them at a future day. The specific appropriation was to provide for a minister to Buenos Ayres and the provinces of La Plata, should the executive deem it expedient and proper to appoint one. The proposition was rejected by a vote of 115 to 45. The inhabitants of Spanish America had long been in a degraded condition, and subject to oppression by the mother-country. Their situation was commiserated by our citizens, and they were generally desirous that the people of that section of America might succeed in throwing off the Spanish yoke, and obtaining their independence. But the policy and propriety of a formal declaration in their favor by the government of the United States, at that period, and in their then unsettled state, was doubted both in Congress and by a large portion of the people. Mr. Clay's speech in favor of the measure, however, was marked by statesmanlike views and philanthropic and liberal feelings; which he expressed in his usual style of eloquence and powerful argument. He was answered by Mr. Forsyth, of Georgia, who opposed the projected measure with great ability.

Tho views of Mr. Clay were subsequetly sanctioned by the course of events, which resulted in South American independence.

The president, soon after the adjournment of Congress, visited the towns and coasts of Chesapeake bay, for the purpose of examining into the state of the forts and other means of defence in that quarter, and the proper location for a naval depôt. Having accomplished the principal object of his tour, he returned to Washington on the 17th of June, through the interior of Virginia.

A treaty having been concluded between the United States and Sweden, which was negotiated by Mr. Jonathan Russell, minister to Stockholm, the same was ratified by the president and senate, in May, 1818. During this year, and while negotiations for a treaty with Spain were pending, serious difficulties arose in Florida, on account of the invasion of the territory then in possession of the Spanish government, by United States troops under General Andrew Jackson, and of the seizure of the fortified towns of St. Marks and Pensacola. General Jackson had been directed to subdue the Seminole Indians, who were then troublesome to the people of the United States in Alabama and vicinity, and strong measures were deemed advisable and necessary by him to effect the object of the government. His excuse for entering the Spanish territory was, that the hostile Indians fled to the Spanish commanders for protection; that they were encouraged by them; and that the safety of the inhabitants in that part of the United States required such proceedings. The president afterward caused the instructions given to General Jackson to be laid before Congress; and he also gave orders immediately for the restoration of the forts and places to the Spanish authorities.

Congress again assembled on the 16th of November, 1818, and continued in session until the 3d of March, 1819, when their term of service expired. The state of Illinois was admitted into the Union, by a resolution passed on the 3d of December, 1818. The people of Alabama were authorized to form a constitution and state government, preparatory to admission as a state. An act was passed establishing a territorial government for Arkansas, then a part of the territory of Missouri. The citizens of Michigan territory were authorized to elect a delegate to Congress. Other important laws were the following: To protect the commerce of the United States, and to punish piracy; to regulate the duties on imported wines, reducing the rates thereon; to provide for the civilization of the Indian tribes adjoining the frontiers, by which the president was authorized to employ suitable persons to teach and encourage them in agriculture, and also to instruct their children in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and ten thousand dollars were appropriated for such purpose; an additional act concerning the coasting trade; an act to authorize the president to take possession of East and West Florida, and to establish a temporary government therein; and an act to provide for the prompt settlement of public accounts.

The conduct of General Jackson with regard to the Seminole war in Florida, was a subject of inquiry in both houses of Congress. In the house of representatives a report was made on the subject by the committee on military affairs, disapproving of the general's proceedings, and concluding with resolutions of censure. After an able and protracted debate, the report and resolutions were rejected by a large majority.

A treaty with Spain was concluded at Washington on the 22d of February, 1819, by John Quincy Adams, secretary of state, on the part of the United States, and Don Luis de Onis on the part of Spain, by which East and West Florida, with all the islands adjacent, were ceded by Spain to the United States. The boundary between the territories of the two powers was also settled by this treaty. A sum not exceeding five millions of dollars was to be paid by the United States, out of the proceeds of sales of lands in Florida, or in stock, or money, to citizens of the United States, on account of former spoliations on American commerce by Spanish vessels-of-war. This treaty was ratified by the king of Spain in October, 1820.

A convention was concluded between the United States and Great Britain, in October, 1818, and afterward ratified by both governments; but the subject of impressment was not embraced in the treaty, nor that of the trade between the United States and the British colonies, though both points were urged by the negotiators on the part of the United States. The principal articles related to the Newfoundland and other fisheries, to the northern boundary line between the territories of each nation, from the lake of the Woods to the Rocky mountains; to the renewal and continuance of the convention of 1815 for the term of ten years; and to the restoration of slaves belonging to citizens of the United States, taken in the course of the war of 1812, as formerly stipulated by the treaty of Ghent.

During the summer of 1819, the president made a tour through the southern section of the country, for similar objects to those which had induced his visit to the north in 1817. In his southern tour the president visited Charleston, Savannah, and Augusta; after which he proceeded through the Cherokee nation to Nashville, Tennessee, and thence to Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky; returning to Washington in the month of August.

The attention of the government continued to be directed chiefly to the financial concerns of the country, by effecting sales of the public lands, and reducing the national debt, as well as to a gradual completion of fortifications for defence. The demands on the treasury had increased, on account of the great number of pensioners under the law of 1818. More than a million of dollars were paid to the veterans of the revolution in one year; and the revenue arising from imports in 1817 was less than in the preceding year. Embarrassments of a pecuniary nature affected most parts of the United States, in 1818 and 1819, and the influence to some extent was felt in the revenue.*

At this period the manufacturing interests of the United States were in a state of extreme depression, owing to the importations of foreign goods at constantly reduced prices, and the general pressure in the monetary affairs of the nation. The president was known to be friendly to further protection of domestic manufactures, by a proper revision of the tariff on imports, and great efforts were made in the northern and middle states to influence public opinion and the action of Congress in favor of the national industry.

The sixteenth Congress assembled on the 6th of December, 1819, and, being the first session, was continued until the 15th of May, 1820. Mr. Clay was again elected speaker, by nearly a unanimous vote, and Mr. Gaillard was continued as president *pro tempore* of the senate. The former distinctions of party having almost if not quite disappeared in Congress, new questions of great national interest arose to divide the members. Additional protection to American manufactures; internal improvements by the general government; and the acknowledgment of the independence of the South American republics; were among the most prominent of the subjects agitated. To these was soon added the Missouri question, which involved the propriety and expediency of the extension of slavery in new states west of the Mississippi.

The state of Alabama was admitted into the Union by a resolution passed December 14, 1819; and an act was passed on the 3d of March, 1820, admitting the state of Maine into the Union, that state having formed a constitution by consent of Massachusetts, with which state Maine, as a province, had been connected since 1652. An act was also passed, on the 6th of March, 1820, authorizing the people of Missouri territory to form a constitution and state government, preparatory to admission into the Union. It was proposed to amend the bill on that subject by inserting a clause imposing it as a condition of admission, that the future removal or transportation of slaves into that territory should be prohibited. This question gave rise to the most exciting and animated debates in both houses of Congress. In the progress of the discussion in the senate, the Missouri bill was annexed to the bill for the admission of Maine, but the proposition was rejected by the house of representatives, after which the bills were separated. On the last day of February, 1820, the amendment proposed in the house to the Missouri bill, restricting slavery, after a very long and able debate, was carried, by a majority of eight votes, but on the next day the same amendment was rejected by a majority of four. The bill was then passed without restrictions, and on the 6th of March approved by the president, Maine having been previously admitted on the 3d of March

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* Bradford.

An attempt was made to pass a new tariff act at this session, giving additional protection to American manufactures. The bill was adopted in the house of representatives by a majority of twenty, but did not receive the concurrence of the senate. Great disappointment was felt by the manufacturers at this result, the pressure and pecuniary distress at the time being great. The heavy importations of foreign manufactures tended to depress prices, and to ruin those engaged in manufactures in the United States. The currency was also in a deranged state. A spirit for banking companies prevailed, and an unusual number of those corporations were authorized in many of the states of the Union. The country was flooded with paper-money issued by these banks, many of which were unable to redeem their bills when presented; and the most disastrous results soon followed. The national bank had been in operation between two and three years, but it had not yet gathered sufficient strength to regulate the currency, which indeed was impracticable, when the balance of trade was largely against the United States, from excessive importations.

An act respecting the public lands, passed at this session, authorized sales in half quarter sections, or eighty acres, fixed the price at one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, and abolished the credit system on sales of lands, directing that after July 1, 1820, all such sales should be made for cash only, The principle of internal improvement by the general government was sanctioned by an act to authorize a survey of a route for a continuation of the Cumberland road from the Ohio river, opposite Wheeling, Virginia, through Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, to the Mississippi, between St. Louis and the mouth of the Illinois river, for which survey an appropriation of ten thousand dollars was made. The navigation act of April, 1818, was amended so as to extend the prohibition of British vessels from the colonies, to all places in the British provinces in America and the West Indies. This and the former act, which were proposed by Rufus King, a senator from New York, were not designed as hostile acts, but as measures called for by a regard to the interests of the navigation of the United States, and in the expectation that they might eventually lead to the adoption of liberal principles and a reciprocity in trade. The president was authorized, by an act passed at this session, to borrow three millions of dollars for the public service, the secretary of the treasury having stated that a deficiency might be expected in the revenue. Attempts were made to pass a bill for establishing a uniform system of bankruptcy; also amending the constitution so as to provide for a uniform mode of choosing electors of president and vice-president, but, after much discussion, both of these propositions were rejected. The members from the northern and eastern states were generally in favor of a bankrupt law, but those from the south and west were opposed to it.

The presidential election coming on in 1820, Messrs. Monroe and Tompkins were nominated for re-election as president and vice-president.

They were again chosen to those high offices by the electoral colleges, with great unanimity, only one vote having been given against Mr. Monroe, while he received 231 ; and 14 against Mr. Tompkins, who received 218 votes.

The second session of the sixteenth Congress commenced on the 13th of November, 1820, and ended on the 3d of March, 1821. Mr. Clay having sent a letter of resignation as speaker, to the clerk of the house of representatives, indispensable private business requiring his attention in the early part of the session, the house proceeded to ballot for a new speaker, but after seven trials without effecting a choice, an adjournment took place until the following day, when, after nineteen unsuccessful ballots, the election of speaker was postponed until the third day. The prominent candidates voted for were John W. Taylor, of New York, Mr. Lowndes, of South Carolina, Mr. Sergeant, of Pennsylvania, and Mr. Samuel Smith, of Maryland. On the third day a choice of speaker was effected, Mr. John W. Taylor being elected by a small majority over all other candidates. Mr. Taylor was of that section of republicans in the state of New York who supported De Witt Clinton, then governor of that state. He was decidedly favorable to a tariff for protection to domestic manufactures, and opposed to the extension of slavery in Missouri. The election of a speaker with these views, was of course the cause of some excitement and dissatisfaction, at a time when questions of great interest were to be determined by the action of Congress, which for a time seemed even to threaten a dissolution of the Union. The mild, impartial, and conciliatory course of the new speaker, however, tended to allay much of the feeling at first excited, at the same time that the respect of the members was elicited toward himself.

The most important question agitated in Congress at this session, was the admission of Missouri into the Union. The constitution framed by the people of that state was communicated to Congress in the early part of the session, and referred to a committee who, through Mr. Lowndes, made an able report on the subject, declaring the constitution of the state republican, and concluding with a resolution that Missouri be admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original states, in all respects whatever. Mr. Lowndes, in moving to refer the resolution to a committee of the whole, stated that the report was the act of a majority of the committee, and not of every individual of the committee. The debate on the subject continued a week, and the discussion was managed with great ability and good temper. It was decided by a majority of fourteen, in the house, that Missouri could not be admitted into the Union with the constitution as presented. Those who voted against the admission, did so on the ground that the constitution of the state permitted slavery, and that there were other objectionable features in that instrument, particularly in relation to free persons of color. The members from the slave states voted unanimously for the admission of Missouri, while those from the northern and middle states, with few exceptions, voted against it.

Matters were in this situation, when the Missouri question again presented itself, on the fourteenth of February, 1821, the day appointed by law for opening and counting the votes for president and vice-president Missouri having chosen presidential electors, and transmitted her votes for president and vice-president to Congress, a resolution passed the senate directing that in case any objection should be made to counting the votes from Missouri, the president of the senate should declare that, if the votes of Missouri were counted, the number of votes for A. B. for president would be so many, and if the votes of Missouri were not counted, the number would be so many, and that in either case A. B. is elected. The same course to be pursued in relation to vice-president. This resolution was taken up in the house on the morning of the day when the votes were to be counted. Mr. Clay having by this time taken his seat as a member, warmly supported the resolution as the only mode of avoiding the difficulty. It was also generally supported by the members in favor of restricting Missouri as to slavery, but opposed by most of those from the slave states. It was finally agreed to on the part of the house, sometime after the hour appointed for the meeting of the two houses to count the votes. Considerable delay and confusion took place while the votes were being counted, and some of the southern members, particularly John Randolph, of Virginia, made an effort to compel the house to declare that Missouri was a state of the Union. The course recommended by the joint resolution was finally adopted, and the president of the senate declared James Monroe and Daniel D. Tompkins duly elected president and vice-president, for the term of four years from the 4th of March, 1821.

On the 26th of February, Mr. Clay, from a joint committee of the two houses appointed on the Missouri question, reported a resolution for the admission of the state into the Union, on condition that the said state, by their legislature, should assent to a condition that a part of the state constitution should never be construed to authorize the passage of a law by which any citizen of either of the states in the Union should be excluded from the enjoyment of any of the privileges and immunities to which such citizen is entitled under the constitution of the United States. After debate, the final question was taken on this resolution, which was carried in the house by a vote of 87 to 81, and was concurred in by the senate on the 28th of February, and being approved by the president on the 2d of March, 1821, Missouri was admitted into the Union. Thus this exciting question was finally settled, principally through the efforts of Mr. Clay, who had also at the former session proposed and procured the adoption of a resolution, or section of compromise, in the act authorizing Missouri to form a constitution, by which slavery was to be for ever prohibited in that part of the territory west of the Mississippi (excepting the state of Missouri), lying north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude.

On the 22d of February the president issued his proclamation on the subject of the treaty which had been made with Spain, and announced that the same had been finally ratified by both the governments of the United States and Spain. Thus another important matter was happily brought to a conclusion.

Mr. Clay again brought before Congress the question of acknowledging the independence of the Spanish provinces of South America, and in the house of representatives resolutions to that effect were adopted.

In the senate a motion to declare the sedition act of 1798 unconstitutional, and to pay back the fines imposed by the United States courts for violations of the law, was offered by Mr. Barbour, of Virginia. After a warm debate the resolution was rejected, and the constitutionality of the law therefore sustained, by a vote of 24 to 19.

At this session of Congress the peace establishment of the army was reduced by law to seven regiments of infantry, and four regiments of artillery, with officers for the ordnance and engineering departments. The annual appropriation for the increase of the navy, which had been fixed in 1816 at one million of dollars, was reduced to five hundred thousand dollars.

Propositions introduced into Congress to prohibit the reception for payments to government in bills of state banks which issued those of a less denomination than five dollars; and to establish a national system of education by funds accruing from the sale of the public lands, were rejected.

An act was passed at this session for carrying into effect the treaty between the United States and Spain, authorizing the president to take possession of Florida, establishing a temporary government in the territory, and extending the laws of the United States to the same. A similar act had been passed by the fifteenth Congress, two years before, namely, March 3, 1819, to take effect when the treaty with Spain should be ratified. The provisions of the present act were somewhat extended. A board of three commissioners, to settle claims under the treaty, was directed to be appointed, and one hundred thousand dollars were appropriated for carrying the act into effect.

On Monday the 5th of March, 1821, Mr. Monroe was again inducted into office, for the term of four years. In the presence of a large concourse of his fellow-citizens, assembled in the hall of representatives at Washington, he delivered an inaugural address of more than ordinary length. The oath of office was administered to him by Chief-Justice Marshall.

The seventeenth Congress held its first session from the 3d of December, 1821, until the 8th of May, 1822. Mr. Clay not being a member of the house of representatives for this Congress, an attempt was made, principally by the friends of a protective tariff, to again elect Mr. John W. Taylor speaker. Numerous ballottings took place without effecting a choice ; but finally, most of the opposition to Mr. Taylor being concentrated on Mr. Philip P. Barbour, of Virginia, he was chosen speaker by a small majority, over Mr. Taylor and a few scattering votes. The views of Mr. Barbour were known to be opposed to a protective tariff, and to a system of internal improvements by the general government, and he had voted against the proposed restrictions respecting slavery on the admission of Missouri.

The most important acts of Congress passed at this session, were as follows : A territorial government was established in Florida, and a law was enacted for the preservation of timber on the public lands in that territory. Another act established a board of three commissioners, to ascertain the claims and titles to land in Florida. A law was also passed to relieve the people from the operation of certain ordinances, one of which was made by General Jackson, while governor of Florida, in 1821, and another passed by the city council of St. Augustine, in 1821. These ordinances were repealed, and declared null and void, and any person attempting to enforce them was to be punished by fine or imprisonment. Provision was made for receiving subscriptions to a loan of twenty-six millions of dollars, at five per cent., in exchange for stock then bearing an interest of six and seven per cent. The state of Illinois was authorized to open a canal through the public lands to connect the Illinois river with Lake Michigan, and ninety feet of land, on each side of said canal was reserved from any sale to be made by the United States ; every section of land through which the canal route might pass, was reserved from future sale, until specially directed by law. Three per cent. of the net proceeds of sales of the public lands in the state of Missouri, Mississippi, and Alabama, was directed to be paid to the said states, to be applied to the making of roads and canals within the same. The apportionment of representatives to Congress among the several states was fixed at one member for every forty thousand of federal population. The president was authorized to declare the ports of the United States open to British vessels from the colonies, on satisfactory evidence being given that the ports in the British West Indies have been opened to the vessels of the United States.

The subject of a general bankrupt law was again debated, and occupied much of the time of this Congress. It was finally rejected, by a vote of 99 to 72. The question of a further protection to manufactures, particularly cottons and woollens, by additional duties on importations of those articles, was rejected, but the standing committee to whom the subject was referred, having been appointed by a speaker who was opposed to protection, reported that any additional legislation was inexpedient. The tariff question excited great attention and interest throughout the United States.

The friends of protection to American manufactures were zealous and active in spreading their views among the people, and in many of the northern and western states the agriculturists were convinced that their interests were promoted by protection, as well as that of the manufacturers. Members of Congress from the southern, and from some of the eastern states, at that time, were opposed to an increase of the tariff on foreign goods, from an impression that high duties operated unequally on different classes and sections of the community.

In accordance with the recommendation of the president, a resolution was offered in the house of representatives, in January, 1822, for recognizing the independence of Mexico, and five provinces in South America, formerly under the dominion of Spain. The vote in the house was nearly unanimous, and one hundred thousand dollars were appropriated to defray the expenses of envoys to those republics, who were soon afterward appointed by the president. A bill was passed by Congress at this session, making an appropriation for continuing the Cumberland road, but was returned by the president, with his objections, which were that the constitution did not authorize such appropriations.

But few acts of general interest were passed at the second session of the seventeenth Congress, which was held from the 2d of December, 1822, to the 3d of March, 1823. An additional naval force was authorized for the suppression of piracy; the state of Ohio was authorized to construct a road from the lower rapids of the Miami of Lake Erie to the western boundary of the Connecticut western reserve, and the lands for one mile on each side of the road were granted to the state to aid in the construction of the road; an act of great length was also passed, directing the manner of doing business at the customhouses of the United States in the collection of duties. Certain sections of the act of May, 1820, prohibiting British vessels from the colonies to enter the ports of the United States, were suspended; and the ports of the United States were declared open to British vessels from the ports in the British colonies and West India islands named in the acts.

A bill was introduced in the senate by Colonel R. M. Johnson, of Kentucky, for abolishing imprisonment for debts due to the United States. This measure was advocated with zeal by the mover, and it was supported by several of the senators, but it was not adopted at this session. Colonel Johnson advocated it for several successive sessions, and it became a law in 1828. The question of additional duties on imports, particularly woollen goods, was again agitated at this session, and debated with much warmth and zeal, but finally the bill to increase the duty on woollens was rejected.

The subject of internal improvements was before Congress at this session, in various forms. It was proposed to cause surveys for canals across Cape Cod—from the river Raritan to the Delaware—from the Delaware to Chesapeake bay—from the Chesapeake to Albemarle sound—and from Lake Erie to the Ohio river. But the proposal was not sanctioned by Congress. The opposition was principally on the ground of unconstitutionality. A discussion also arose on the motion to appropriate money for the repairs of the Cumberland road. Large sums had been expended on that work, which was deemed of national importance, but it was then in such a state as to be nearly impassable in some parts. The president had intimated a willingness to favor a bill for repairing the road, though opposed to extending it. The session closed without any definite action on the question.

A convention of navigation and commerce was made and concluded between the United States and France, in 1822; which was ratified by the president and senate, and a law passed by both houses of Congress to carry its provisions into effect. This treaty was negotiated by the secretary of state, John Quincy Adams, and the Baron Hyde de Neuville, minister plenipotentiary of the king of France. Efforts had been made for a long time by the government of the United States, to form a treaty with France; but the French court had manifested great reluctance to enter into a convention for the purpose. The trade of that nation did not suffer from want of such a treaty, but the United States lost many advantages by the omission.

After the peace of 1815, the commerce and navigation of the United States did not reap all the advantages from that event which might justly have been hoped. A restrictive and monopolizing policy was adopted by both France and Great Britain; and these countries derived great benefits from the trade to the United States, while reciprocal advantages were not realized by the merchants of the latter. It was a constant object, for some years, particularly in 1820–'22, with enlightened politicians in the United States, who were favorable to commerce, to devise measures for removing the embarrassments produced by the policy of European powers; or to make regulations respecting the navigation and trade of foreigners to American ports, which should prove to be countervailing, in some degree, of the restrictive system of those governments. The principal measures adopted by Congress, with this view, were proposed or advocated by Mr. Rufus King, a senator from the state of New York; than whom no one in Congress was more active in favor of commerce, or had more correct and enlarged views on the subject.*

As early as 1822, when three years of Mr. Monroe's second term as president were yet unexpired, the question relative to his successor already occupied most intensely the minds of politicians at Washington, disturbed legislation, and embarrassed the action of Congress. The excitement on the subject steadily increased at the seat of government, and rapidly spread through the nation. Of the several candidates spoken of for president, none were supported or opposed on account of any particular measures which they respectively advocated or condemned. The question about the selection of a candidate was, in fact, personal, not political; but this circumstance, instead of rendering it less, caused it to be more exciting. The names of many gentlemen were mentioned as candidates, but the number gradually diminished, until the contest finally seemed to be confined to William H. Crawford, secretary of the treasury; John Quincy Adams, secretary of state; Henry Clay, speaker of the house of representatives; John C. Calhoun, secretary of war; and General Andrew Jackson, at that time a private citizen. Each of these candidates, during the war with Great Britain, were warm and efficient supporters of Mr. Madison's administration, and zealous members of the democratic party.*

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* Bradford.

In this state of things, the elections for members of the eighteenth Congress took place. Most of the members, however, were chosen before the public mind had become fixed, in various parts of the country, on either of the candidates; consequently the individual preferences of a large portion of the members of Congress were unknown to the people by whom they were elected. It was apparent to observing politicians, that the final choice of president would probably fall on Congress, in consequence of the number of candidates preventing a choice by the electoral colleges.

It soon became evident that a large proportion of the old politicians of the democratic party had decided to support Mr. Crawford for the succession. He had been, it will be recollected, a formidable candidate against Mr. Monroe in the congressional caucus in 1816. Since the election of the latter, Mr. Crawford had been a prominent member of his cabinet, as secretary of the treasury, and it was well known that he would now be sustained by Virginia and Georgia, and it was believed that he would also be supported by most of the southern democracy. The general impression among political men was, that a majority of the leading and influential democrats in the Union concurred in the policy of supporting Mr. Crawford. Among these was Mr. Van Buren, then a senator in Congress from the state of New York, and a leading democrat in that state, with whom other prominent men of the same party acted, sufficient in power and influence, as it was thought, to give the electoral vote of the state to Mr. Crawford.

Previous to the meeting of Congress, the annual election took place in the state of New York, in November, 1823, for members of the legislature, by whom the electors of president were to be chosen. The result was unexpected and very unsatisfactory to the friends of Mr. Crawford, for although they claimed a majority of the members elect, yet the city and county of New York, and many other counties, had decided against them, and the anti-Crawford men likewise claimed a majority in the legislature. The latter, moreover, rested their hopes of success on the passage

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* Hammond's History of Parties.

of a law by the legislature, giving the choice of electors to the people. This question, which was for many months agitated in New York, gave rise to what was called the people's party, which comprised in its ranks most of the people opposed to Mr. Crawford for the presidency.

On the 1st day of December, 1823, the eighteenth Congress held their first session, which continued until the 26th of May, 1824. Mr. Clay, who was again elected a member from Kentucky, was chosen speaker of the house, by a large majority, over Mr. Barbour, speaker of the last Congress.

The most important acts passed at this session were those relating to the protection of American manufactures, and internal improvement. The president was authorized to cause the necessary surveys, plans, and estimates, to be made of the routes of such roads and canals as he might deem of national importance, for which purpose the sum of thirty thousand dollars was appropriated. The president, after mature deliberation, changed his former views on the subject of internal improvements by the general government, and gave this bill his approval, which proved a model and precedent for future legislation on this subject. There was a very general opinion at that time in favor of internal improvements. The tariff act passed at this session was intended as a protection to American manufactures; it raised the duties on many articles of imports from foreign countries coming in contact with articles manufactured in the United States. It was the result of the combined efforts of the advocates of protection to domestic industry throughout the Union, added to the recommendation of the president and the support of members of Congress principally from the northern, middle, and western states. The bill was debated for weeks in both houses, and called forth the first talent in Congress. The most strenuous opposition was made by the members from the southern states. Some northern members voted against the bill, because they were dissatisfied with its details, rather than with its general principles. The majority in its favor in the senate was four, and in the house five only.

An act was passed to provide for the extinguishment of the debt due to the United States by the purchasers of public lands, by which persons who had bought these lands on credit, of the United States, could receive a discharge of the debt, or part thereof, by relinquishing to the United States the lands so purchased, or part of the lands, according to the amount due. Donations of lands were granted to certain actual settlers in Florida.

The state of Indiana was authorized to open a canal through the public lands, to connect the navigation of the waters of the Wabash river with those of Lake Erie; and every section of land through which the said canal route might pass was reserved from future sale. The naturalization laws were amended so as to allow aliens being minors to become citizens of the United States after arriving at the age of twenty-one years, provided they had resided five years in the United States.

The presidential question was at this time the all-absorbing subject of interest, both among members of Congress and the people. One great point, about which the members of Congress were divided, was whether an attempt should be made to nominate candidates for president and vice-president by a congressional caucus, as had been the uniform practice of the democratic party. The friends of Mr. Crawford, with Mr. Van Buren at their head, were in favor of a caucus, and disposed to denounce all those who were opposed to this mode, which they called "regular nomination," as enemies of the democratic party. A committee of members opposed to Mr. Crawford stated, in the National Intelligencer newspaper, that of two hundred and sixty-one members, it was ascertained one hundred and eighty-one were opposed to a caucus; and it was added, that many others would not attend should such a meeting be called.

Notwithstanding this statement, a meeting of the democratic members of Congress was called by the friends of Mr. Crawford, and on the 14th of February, 1824, the assemblage took place. Only sixty-six members attended, of whom forty-eight were from the four states of New York, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. On a ballot for president, Mr. Crawford received 64 votes, Mr. Adams 2, General Jackson 1, and Mr. Macon, of North Carolina, 1. Mr. Gallatin was nominated for vice-president, but afterward declined.

The issue of this attempt to nominate Mr. Crawford proved injurious to his prospects, and about the same time his health became so much impaired that serious doubts were entertained of his capability on that account to perform the duties of the office of president in case of his election. In the state of New York the Crawford party became very unpopular, in consequence of some of their leading men having rejected a law proposed by the people's party in the legislature, providing for the choice of presidential electors by the people. The electors in the state of New York were therefore chosen by the legislature; but owing principally to the efforts of General James Tallmadge, the champion of the people's party in the legislature on that occasion, with the aid of Mr. Henry Wheaton and other zealous members of that body, the friends of Mr. Crawford met with an unexpected defeat, and the electoral vote of the state was given as follows: for Adams 26, for Crawford 5, for Clay 4, for Jackson 1.

This election in New York, with the result in other states, showed that no choice had been made for president by the electoral colleges, and according to the provisions of the constitution, the decision was referred to the house of representatives. The total votes of the colleges of electors for president, were, for Jackson 99, Adams 84, Crawford 41, Clay 37. John C. Calhoun was elected vice-president, having received 182 votes, against 78 for all others. The choice of president by the house of representatives was, as the constitution requires, confined to the three highest candidates. The election by the house was held in February, 1825, when Mr. Adams received the votes of 13 states on the first ballot, General Jackson 7 states, and Mr. Crawford 4 states. John Quincy Adams was therefore declared elected president of the United States for four years, from the 4th of March, 1825.

The second session of the eighteenth Congress was held from the 6th of December, 1824, to the expiration of their term on the 3d of March, 1825. But few acts of general interest were passed; among them was one to reduce into one the several acts regulating the postoffice department. An act was also passed respecting drawbacks of duties on goods re-exported; another to provide for the punishment of certain crimes against the United States; and an act concerning wrecks on the coast of Florida

A resolution was offered in the senate, in February, 1825, by Mr. King, of New York, proposing that after the payment of the public debt, for which the public lands were pledged, should be made, the proceeds of the sales should be applied to the emancipation of such slaves within any of the United States, and to aid in the removal of such free persons of color as by the laws of any state were allowed to be emancipated or removed, to any territory without the limits of the United States. The resolution, which did not receive the sanction of the senate, was not designed to interfere with the laws and usages of any state relating to slaves. Had it been adopted, the effect would have been similar to that the Colonization Society have in view; and would have secured funds for the purpose.

The last year of Mr. Monroe's administration was distinguished by the visit to the United States of the Marquis de Lafayette, the friend and ally of the Americans during their struggle with Great Britain in the war of the revolution.

The administration of Mr. Monroe, which closed on the 3d of March, 1825, was eminently prosperous and advantageous to the nation. At no period in our history has party spirit been so much subdued, and the attention of the national legislature more exclusively devoted to objects of public benefit. In the language of his successor, Mr. Adams, President Monroe "strengthened his country for defence, by a system of combined fortifications, military and naval, sustaining her rights, her dignity and honor abroad; soothing her dissensions, and conciliating her acerbities at home; controlling by a firm though peaceful policy, the hostile spirit of the European alliance against republican Southern America; extorting, by the mild compulsion of reason, the shores of the Pacific from the stipulated acknowledgment of Spain; and leading back the Imperial Autocrat of the north, to his lawful boundaries, from his hastily-asserted dominion over the southern ocean. Thus strengthening and consolidating the federative edifice of his country's union, till he was entitled to say, like Augustus Cæsar of his imperial city, that he had found her build of brick, and left her constructed of marble."

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J. Q. Adams

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

When the constitution of the United States was formed, in 1787, and the question of its adoption was before the people, the opponents of a consolidated government, and those who preferred the old confederation, represented the executive established by the constitution, as the chief of an elective monarchy. Mr. Jefferson considered him a bad edition of a Polish king, as he expressed it. But no one apprehended any danger of the office of president ever becoming hereditary. It is, however, a curious circumstance, that the only one of the first five presidents of the United States who had a son, should have lived to see his eldest son elected to the presidency. It must not from this be supposed that the circumstances of the birth and family of John Quincy Adams had any influence in contributing to his elevation to the same high office which his father had previously filled. On the contrary, the jealousy of the American people on the subject of any supposed preference in consequence of family or rank, probably operated to the prejudice of Mr. Adams, and diminished the popular support which he would otherwise have received; for no American was ever more fully qualified by talents and education for the various important stations which he has been called to fill, than the distinguished statesman who is the subject of the present memoir.

Born in the year 1767, on the 11th day of July, at the mansion of his father, John Adams, who then resided in Boston, although the family-seat was in the present town of Quincy, Massachusetts, John Quincy Adams (who afterward became the sixth president of the United States) took the name of John Quincy, his great grandfather, who bore a distinguished part in the councils of the province, at the commencement of the eighteenth century.*

In the very dawn of his existence the principles of American independence and freedom were instilled into the mind of the younger Adams.

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* A part of this sketch is an abstract of a memoir of Mr. Adams published in 1828.

Both his father and mother were the most zealous promoters of the cause of their country in the struggle with Great Britain. When the father of Mr. Adams repaired to France as joint commissioner with Franklin and Lee, he was accompanied by his son John Quincy, then in his eleventh year. In that country he passed a year and a half with his father, and enjoyed the privilege of the daily intercourse and parental attentions of Doctor Franklin, whose kind notice of the young was a peculiar trait in his character, and whose primitive simplicity of manners and methodical habits left a lasting impression on the mind of his youthful countryman.

After a residence of about eighteen months in France, young Adams returned to America with his father, who assisted in forming a constitution for Massachusetts, but was soon called upon again by Congress to repair to Europe, as a commissioner for negotiating treaties with Holland and other powers, but particularly with Great Britain, as soon as she was disposed to put an end to the war.

He again took his son with him, and sailed in a French frigate, which in consequence of springing a dangerous leak, was compelled to put into Ferrol, in Spain. From that place Mr. Adams and his son travelled by land to Paris, where they arrived in January, 1780. For a few months Mr. Adams sent his son to school in Paris; but in July, the same year, he took him with him to Holland, where he was called to negotiate a loan for the United States. He placed his son first in the public school of the city of Amsterdam, and afterward in the city university of Leyden. In July, 1781, Mr. Francis Dana (afterward chief-justice of the state of Massachusetts), who had gone out with Mr. Adams as secretary of legation, received from the continental Congress the appointment of minister to the court of the empress of Russia, and John Quincy Adams was selected by Mr. Dana as a private secretary of this mission. After spending fourteen months with Mr. Dana, he left him to return through Sweden, Denmark, Hamburg, and Bremen, to Holland, where his father had been publicly received as minister from the United States, and had concluded a commercial treaty with the republic of the Netherlands. He performed this journey during the winter of 1782–'3, being only sixteen years of age, without a companion. He reached the Hague in April, 1783, his father being at that time engaged at Paris in the negotiation of peace. From April to July his son remained at the Hague, under the care of Mr. Dumas, a native of Switzerland, who then filled the office of an agent of the United States. The negotiations for peace being suspended in July, Mr. Adams's father repaired on business to Amsterdam; and on his return to Paris he took his son with him. The definitive treaty of peace was signed in September, 1783, from which time till May, 1785, he was chiefly with his father in England, Holland, and France.

It was at this period that he formed an acquaintance with Mr. Jefferson, then residing in France as American minister. The intercourse of Mr.

Jefferson with his former colleague in Congress, the father of Mr. Adams, was of an intimate and confidential kind, and led to a friendship for his son which, formed in early life, scarcely suffered an interruption from subsequent political dissensions, and revived with original strength during the last years of the life of this venerable statesman.

Mr. Adams was, at the period last mentioned, about eighteen years of age. Born in the crisis of his country's fortunes, he had led a life of wandering and vicissitude, unusual at any age. His education, in everything but the school of liberty, had been interrupted and irregular. He had seen much of the world—much of men—and had enjoyed but little leisure for books. Anxious to complete his education, and still more anxious to return to his native land, when his father was, in 1785, appointed minister to the court of St. James, his son, at that period of life when the pleasures and splendor of a city like London are most calculated to fascinate and mislead, asked permission of his father to go back to his native shores. This he accordingly did. On his return to America he became a member of the ancient college of Harvard, at Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he graduated in July, 1787.

On leaving college, Mr. Adams entered the office of Theophilus Parsons, afterward chief justice of the state, as a student of law, at Newburyport. On a visit of General Washington to that town, in 1789, Mr. Parsons, being chosen by his fellow-citizens to be the medium of expressing their sentiments to the general, called upon his pupils each to prepare an address. This call was obeyed by Mr. Adams, and his address was delivered by Mr. Parsons.

After completing his law studies, at Newburyport, Mr. Adams removed to Boston, with view of commencing the practice of his profession at the bar. His time not being fully occupied, Mr. Adams employed his leisure hours in speculations upon the great political questions of the day.

In April, 1793, on the first intimation that war between Great Britain and France had been declared, Mr. Adams published a short series of papers, the object of which was, to prove that the duty and interest of the United States required them to remain neutral in the contest. These papers were published before General Washington's proclamation of neutrality, and without any knowledge that a proclamation would be issued. The opinions they expressed were in opposition to the views generally prevailing, that the treaty of alliance of 1778 obliged us to take part in the wars of France. But the proclamation of neutrality by General Washington, sanctioned by all his cabinet, including Mr. Jefferson, was shortly made public, and confirmed the justice of the views which Mr. Adams had been (it is believed) the first to express before the public on this new and difficult topic of national law.

In the winter of 1793 and 1794, the inflammatory appeals of the French minister to the United States, Mr. Genet, caused much excitement in the public mind. Among those who co-operated in support of the administration of Washington in resisting Mr. Genet, none was more conspicuous than Mr. Adams, whose essays in favor of neutrality were read and admired throughout the country.

His reputation was soon established, as an American statesman and political writer. Before his retirement from the department of state, Mr. Jefferson recommended him to General Washington, as a proper person to be introduced into the public service of the country. The acquaintance between Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams which had been formed in France, had lately been renewed, on occasion of a visit to Philadelphia in 1792; and the promptitude and ability with which he had seconded the efforts of the secretary of state in enforcing neutrality, no doubt led Mr. Jefferson thus to recommend him to General Washington.

The publications of Mr. Adams above alluded to, had attracted the attention of General Washington. He had in private expressed the highest opinion of them, and had made particular inquiries with respect to their author. Thus honorably identified, at the early age of twenty-seven, with the first great and decisive step of the foreign policy of the United States, and thus early attracting the notice, and enjoying the confidence of Washington, Mr. Adams was, in May, 1794, appointed minister resident to the Netherlands, an office corresponding in rank and salary with that of a chargé d'affaires at the present day. The father of Mr. Adams was at this time vice-president of the United States; but the appointment of his son was made by General Washington, unexpectedly to the vice-president, and without any previous intimation that it would take place.

Mr. Adams remained at his post in Holland about two years. He was an attentive observer of the great events then occurring in Europe, and his official correspondence with the government was regarded by General Washington as of the highest importance.

Toward the close of General Washington's administration, he appointed Mr. Adams minister plenipotentiary to Portugal. On his way from the Hague to Lisbon, he received a new commission, changing his destination to Berlin. This latter appointment was made by Mr. Adams's father, then president of the United States, and in a manner highly honorable to the restraint of his parental feelings, in the discharge of an act of public duty. Although Mr. Adams's appointment to Portugal was made by General Washington, and President Adams did no more than propose his transfer to Berlin, yet feelings of delicacy led him to hesitate, before he took even this step. He consulted his predecessor and friend, then retired from office, and placed in a situation beyond the reach of any of the motives which can possibly prejudice the minds of men in power. The following letter from General Washington, is the reply to President Adams's inquiry, and will ever remain an honorable testimony to the character of Mr. Adams:—

"MONDAY, *February* 20, 1797.

"DEAR SIR: I thank you for giving me a perusal of the enclosed. The sentiments do honor to the head and heart of the writer; and if my wishes would be of any avail, they should go to you in a strong hope that you will not withhold merited promotion from John Q. Adams because he is your son. For, without intending to compliment the father or the mother, or to censure any others, I give it as my decided opinion, that Mr. Adams is the most valuable public character we have abroad; and that there remains no doubt in my mind, that he will prove himself to be the ablest of all our diplomatic corps. If he was now to be brought into that line, or into any other public walk, I could not, upon the principle which has regulated my own conduct, disapprove of the caution which is hinted at in the letter. But he is already entered; the public, more and more, as he is known, are appreciating his talents and worth; and his country would sustain a loss, if these were to be checked by over-delicacy on your part.

"With sincere esteem, and affectionate regard,

"I am ever yours,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

The principal object of Mr. Adams's mission to Berlin was effected by the conclusion of a treaty of commerce with Prussia. He remained at that court till the spring of 1801, when he was recalled by his father, and returned to America. During the last year of his residence in Prussia, he made an excursion into the province of Silesia, which he described in a series of letters that were afterward collected and published in a volume, and have been translated into French and German, and extensively circulated in Europe. In March, 1798, while he was at Berlin, he was appointed by the president and senate, commissioner to renew the treaty with Sweden.

The advantages enjoyed by Mr. Adams, during his residence on the continent of Europe, from 1794 to 1801, he did not fail to improve, and they were of great importance in extending his political knowledge, and in their influence upon his character and feelings. He contemplated with the eye of a careful observer the great movements in the political world which were then taking place, and which included many of the most important events of the French revolution. A combination of peculiar circumstances enabled him to hold an important and truly American course between the violent extremes to which public opinion in America ran, on the great question of our foreign relations. It was also fortunate that he was absent from the country during the period when domestic parties were organized and arrayed against each other. His situation secured him from the necessity of taking part in those political contentions in which he must either have been placed in the painful position of acting with the party opposed to his father, or he would have been obliged to encounter the natural imputation of being biased in support of him by filial attachment. From this alternative Mr. Adams was spared by his residence abroad during the whole period in which our domestic parties were acquiring their organization; and he returned to his native land a stranger to local parties, and a friend to his country.

In 1802, Mr. Adams was elected to the senate of Massachusetts from the district of Boston; and signalized that fearless independence which has ever characterized his political course, by his strong, though ineffectual opposition to a powerful combination of banking interests, of which the centre was placed among his immediate constituents.

In 1803, he was elected by the legislature of Massachusetts, a senator of the United States. There was a federal majority in that body, but Mr. Adams was not elected by a party vote. He was considered a moderate federalist, but, when elected, was unpledged, either as to opposition or support, to any men or measures other than those which his own sense of duty should dictate to him to be supported or opposed.

His conduct in the United States senate was such as might have been expected from his position. He neither had principles to permit, nor passions to drive him into indiscriminate opposition or blind support. He supported the administration of Mr. Jefferson in every measure which his judgment approved. With the democratic party in the senate he voted for the embargo recommended by Mr. Jefferson, believing that the hostile decrees of France and England against American commerce called for retaliatory or restrictive measures. For his course in this particular, Mr. Adams was censured by the legislature of Massachusetts, in a series of resolutions passed by that body, which also, in May, 1808, elected Mr. Lloyd as senator from the period of the expiration of Mr. Adams's term. Not choosing to represent constituents who had lost their confidence in him, Mr. Adams resigned his place in the senate of the United States.

The support of a man holding the position and possessing the talents of Mr. Adams, was peculiarly acceptable to the administration of Mr. Jefferson, at a crisis when a defection in the ranks of the democratic party wore an alarming aspect to those in power. His course was, however, severely censured by his former political friends, the federalists of Massachusetts, who considered his support of the embargo, and other measures of Mr. Jefferson's administration, as an act of separation from the federal party. His father had previously indicated similar views to those of his son, and finally became a zealous supporter of democratic men and measures.

Previous to retiring from the senate of the United States, namely, in 1806, Mr. Adams was called to the chair of rhetoric and oratory in Harvard college, and delivered a course of lectures on the *art of speaking well;* an important art to the youth of a free country.

But Mr. Adams was not destined to remain long in retirement. Soon after the accession of Mr. Madison to the presidency, he appointed Mr.

Adams, with the senate's concurrence, in June, 1809, minister plenipotentiary to the court of the emperor of Russia. He was the first minister from the United States to that country. Mr. Jefferson, perceiving the importance to the United States of both political amity and commercial intercourse with the great Russian empire, sent Levett Harris as American consul to St. Petersburg, through whom a correspondence ensued between the Russian emperor and the American president, which began the good relations that have subsisted without interruption between the two countries. One of the last acts of Mr. Jefferson's administration was to nominate an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Russia, whom the senate rejected.

The emperor Alexander, who was then on the throne of Russia, was one of the most remarkable men of the age; well educated, well informed, liberal, and generous, he regarded the United States with such kindness that, on the most despotic throne in the old world, he freely expressed his admiration of the republican institutions of the new.*

The intelligence of the declaration of war by the United States against Great Britain, was known in Russia in September, 1812. Mr. Adams had the good fortune to acquire the confidence of the emperor, who admitted him to a degree of intimacy rarely enjoyed with despotic monarchs, even by their own ministers. On the 20th of September, 1812, the Russian minister Romanzoff informed Mr. Adams that, having made peace with Great Britain, the emperor was much concerned and disappointed to find the commercial benefits which he expected his subjects would derive from that event, defeated and lost by the war between the United States and Great Britain. He therefore suggested a settlement of the difficulties by mediation, offering himself to act as mediator, in terms of great good-will, which Mr. Adams met and answered with corresponding cordiality. In the course of his conversation with the Russian minister, the American envoy stated that he knew his government engaged in the war with reluctance; that it would be highly injurious, both to the United States and to England; that he could see no good result as likely to arise from it to any one. The minister from Russia to the United States was directed to proffer the mediation to the American government, which was formally accepted in March, 1813, by the latter, but it was declined by the British government. It was unquestionably owing to the confidential relation between Mr. Adams and the emperor, that the mediation of Russia was tendered; and though it was declined by England, the mediation produced an offer from that country to treat directly with the United States, and thus led to peace.

It was for this reason that Mr. Adams was placed at the head of the five commissioners by whom the treaty of peace was negotiated at Ghent, in 1814; his associates on that commission being James A. Bayard, Henry Clay, Jonathan Russell, and Albert Gallatin.

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* Ingersoll.

The skill with which that negotiation was conducted, is well known. Mr. Adams bore a full part in its counsels and labors; and a proportionate share of the credit is due to him for that cogency and skill which drew from the marquis of Wellesley, in the British house of lords, the declaration, that "in his opinion the American commissioners had shown the most astonishing superiority over the British, during the whole of the correspondence."

This tribute is the more honorable to Mr. Adams and his colleagues, from the circumstance that, on every important point, the British commissioners received special instructions from the ministry at London, directing the terms in which the American envoys were to be answered.

Having borne this distinguished part, in bringing the war to a close by an honorable peace, Mr. Adams was employed, in conjunction with Messrs. Clay and Gallatin, in negotiating a convention of commerce with Great Britain, on the basis of which our commercial intercourse with that country has since been conducted.

On the 28th of February, 1815, Mr. Madison gave a further proof of his confidence in Mr. Adams, by appointing him (with the consent of the senate) minister to Great Britain, and he continued to represent the United States at that court until the accession of Mr. Monroe to the presidency, in March, 1817.

In the formation of his cabinet, Mr. Monroe consulted with several of the most distinguished of his friends, among others with General Jackson, to whom he wrote as follows: "I shall take a person for the department of state from the eastward; and Mr. Adams's long service in our diplomatic concerns appearing to entitle him to the preference, supported by his acknowledged talents and integrity, his nomination will go to the senate." To this General Jackson replied: "I have no hesitation in saying, you have made the best selection to fill the department of state that could be made. Mr. Adams in the hour of difficulty will be an able helpmate, and I am convinced his appointment will afford general satisfaction."

In pursuance of the above intimation of Mr. Monroe, Mr. Adams was called home from England, and appointed secretary of state in March, 1817. On this arduous office he entered with the general approbation of the people. During the eight years of Mr. Monroe's administration, Mr. Adams remained in the department of state, retaining the entire confidence of Mr. Monroe, and acquiring that of his colleagues in the cabinet. In reference to all questions of the foreign relations of the country, he was the influential member of the government; and is, consequently, more than any other individual connected with the executive, entitled to the credit of the measures which, during Mr. Monroe's administration, were adopted in reference to the foreign policy of the government. One of the most important of these measures was the recognition of the independence of the new republics of Spanish America. The credit of first effectually proposing that measure in the house of representatives is due to Mr. Clay, while speaker of that body ; that of choosing the propitious moment when it could be proposed with the unanimous consent of Congress, and the nation, belongs to Mr. Adams. Nor is he entitled to less credit for the successful termination of our differences with Spain. A controversy of thirty years' standing, which had resisted the skill of every preceding administration of the government, was brought to an honorable close. Indemnity was procured for our merchants, and East and West Florida added to our republic. Next to the purchase of Louisiana, the acquisition of Florida may be viewed as one of the most important measures in our history as a nation. Among his reports while secretary of state, may be mentioned that on weights and measures, made to the United States senate in 1821, in conformity with a resolution of that body, passed in 1817. This report is distinguished for its ability and research.

On every important occasion and question that arose during Mr. Monroe's administration, the voice of Mr. Adams was for his country, for mild councils, and for union. In the agitation of the Missouri question, his influence was exerted for conciliation. He believed that by the constitution and the treaty of cession of 1803, Congress was barred from adopting the proposed restrictions on the admission of Missouri. Of internal improvement by roads and canals, he was ever the friend, and moved in the senate of the United States the first project of their systematic construction.

When the question of a successor to Mr. Monroe in the presidency became the subject of agitation, the claims of Mr. Adams to that high office were admitted to be strong and decided, by a large portion of his countrymen. His elevation was desired by a numerous body of calm, reflecting men, throughout the Union, who desired to see the government administered with the ability and integrity which belonged, as they knew, to the character of Mr. Adams. The other rival candidates for the presidency, Andrew Jackson, William H. Crawford, and Henry Clay, also presented severally strong claims for the support of the people. Of these several candidates, Mr. Adams was the only one who represented the non-slaveholding interest, and he was the second choice of an immense proportion of the people, who, for various causes, preferred one of the other candidates.

In consequence of the number in nomination for president, no choice was effected by the electoral colleges, and neither candidate approached nearer than within thirty-two votes of a majority. General Jackson received 99 votes, Mr. Adams 84, Mr. Crawford 41, and Mr. Clay 37. For the vice-presidency, John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, received 182 votes, and was consequently elected. The choice of the president, according to constitutional provisions, was referred to the house of representatives, and, contrary to general expectation, an election was made on the first ballot; Mr. Adams having received the votes of thirteen states, General Jackson seven states, and Mr. Crawford four states. In this election by the house, Mr. Clay and his friends having voted for Mr. Adams, great indignation was expressed by the supporters of General Jackson, but the friends of Mr. Crawford, generally, at first appeared satisfied with the result, as they preferred Mr. Adams to General Jackson, and the health of Mr. Crawford was then so precarious as to render him nearly, if not quite, incompetent for the office.

A committee of the house was appointed to wait on Mr. Adams and notify him of his election to the presidency; to this notification he made the following reply:—

"GENTLEMEN: In receiving this testimonial from the representatives of the people, and states of this Union, I am deeply sensible to the circumstances under which it has been given. All my predecessors in the high station to which the favor of the house now calls me, have been honored with majorities of the electoral voices in their primary colleges. It has been my fortune to be placed, by the divisions of sentiment prevailing among our countrymen on this occasion, in competition, friendly and honorable, with three of my fellow-citizens, all justly enjoying, in an eminent degree, the public favor; and of whose worth, talents, and services, no one entertains a higher and more respectful sense than myself. The names of two of them were, in the fulfilment of the provisions of the constitution, presented to the selection of the house, in concurrence with my own; names closely associated with the glory of the nation, and one of them further recommended by a larger majority of the primary electoral suffrages than mine.

"In this state of things, could my refusal to accept the trust thus delegated to me, give an immediate opportunity to the people to form and to express with a nearer approach to unanimity, the object of their preference, I should not hesitate to decline the acceptance of this eminent charge, and to submit the decision of this momentous question again to their determination. But the constitution itself has not so disposed of the contingency which would arise in the event of my refusal; I shall, therefore, repair to the post assigned me by the call of my country signified through her constitutional organs; oppressed with the magnitude of the task before me, but cheered with the hope of that generous support from my fellow-citizens which, in the vicissitudes of a life devoted to their service, has never failed to sustain me—confident in the trust, that the wisdom of the legislative councils will guide and direct me in the path of my official duty, and relying, above all, upon the superintending providence of that Being, in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways.

"Gentlemen, I pray you to make acceptable to the house the assurance of my profound gratitude for their confidence, and to accept yourselves my thanks for the friendly terms in which you have communicated to me their decision."

The administration of Mr. Adams as president of the United States, commenced on the 4th of March, 1825, and continued four years. A combination having taken place immediately after the election, of a majority of the friends of Mr. Crawford with those of General Jackson, it was soon apparent that the new administration was destined to meet with a systematic and violent opposition. Every effort on the part of Mr. Adams to conciliate his opponents, and to conduct the public affairs with integrity and usefulness, proved ineffectual to turn the torrent of popular opinion which set steadily against him. In the third year of his term the administration was in the minority in both branches of Congress, and the opposition being concentrated on General Jackson as a candidate for president, he was in 1828 elected, by a large majority, over Mr. Adams.

In March, 1829, Mr. Adams retired to private life, carrying with him the esteem of his political friends, and the respect of his opponents, who generally gave him the credit of good intentions, however they might have differed with him in his views of public policy. While holding the high office of president, he uniformly declined the exercise of a proscriptive spirit toward those of his political opponents whom he found in office; magnanimously conceding to all the right of exercising their own free will in the choice of rulers, and in supporting or opposing the administration.

After the inauguration of his successor, General Jackson, Mr. Adams continued a short time at Washington city. He then repaired to his family mansion, and the scenes of his early youth, at Quincy, near Boston, Massachusetts, where, in the possession of a competent fortune, and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of domestic life with his family, he might have expected to pass the remainder of his days. But the people of his own immediate neighborhood were not willing to allow him to remain long in retirement. In 1830 he was elected to represent the district in which he resided, in the Congress of the United States, and the following year, namely, in December, 1831, he took his seat in the house of representatives at Washington city, being then in the 65th year of his age, and having already passed about forty years in the public service.

In the national legislature, he took and maintained the stand to which his eminent talents and distinguished services entitled him. The confidence of his constituents, was manifested by continued re-elections to the house of representatives, of which he was a constant member until his death, a period of more than sixteen years.

His reports as chairman of committees on various subjects, particularly on those of manufactures and finance, are among the ablest papers to be found among the national records. He distinguished himself especially on the organization of the twenty-sixth Congress, in December, 1839, when difficulties of a novel character occurred, in consequence of disputed seats from the state of New Jersey, which prevented for many days the choice of a speaker. On that occasion Mr. Adams was chosen, by unanimous consent, chairman of the house while it was in a state of confusion and disorder. By his skill and influence, he was enabled to calm the turbulent elements of a disorganized house, and to bring about a settlement of the difficulties which threatened the dissolution of the government.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Mr. Adams's career as a member of the house of representatives, was his firm adherence to the right of the people to petition Congress, and to be heard through their representatives, on any subject whatsoever. He took an active part in debate, on nearly every topic of public interest, and his speeches were frequently marked with the most fervid eloquence.

The private character of Mr. Adams was always above reproach, in his intercourse with his fellow-men, and in all the various duties of a long life. Without any uncommon professions, he uniformly evinced great respect for the Christian religion, and, like his father, gave a preference to the doctrines of the unitarian church.

In a biographical sketch of Mr. Adams, written for the first edition of the Statesman's Manual in 1846, we made use of the following words: "The subject of this memoir is still found at his post in the public service, where, like the earl of Chatham, it may be expected his mortal career will finally close."

What was then a thought, in advance of a probable result, became an historical fact in 1848. On the twenty-second of February (the birthday of Washington), in that year Mr. Adams was prostrated by paralysis, while in his seat in the house of representatives, and yielded up his spirit to his Maker on the following day (February 23, 1848), being then in his eighty-first year. He died in the speaker's room in the capitol, and his last words were, "This is the last of earth." A committee of members of Congress accompanied his remains to the family burying-ground at Quincy, due honors being paid to his memory in the principal cities and towns, through which the corpse was carried to its final resting-place.

Mr. Adams was of middle stature, and full person, his eyes dark and piercing, and beaming with intelligence. He always led an active life, and enjoyed good health to an advanced age, his health being promoted, doubtless, by his early rising and bodily exercise. His mind was highly cultivated, and he was considered one of the most accomplished scholars and statesmen in America.

Mr. Adams, in May, 1797, was married to Louisa Catherine, daughter of Joshua Johnson, Esq., of Maryland, who then resided in London. By this lady, who survives him, he had four children, three sons and one daughter, of whom one only, Charles F. Adams of Boston, is now living.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

The inauguration of John Quincy Adams as president of the United States, took place on the 4th of March, 1825. At about half-past twelve o'clock on that day he was introduced into the capitol, followed by the ex-president, Mr. Monroe, and his family, by the judges of the supreme court, in their robes of office, and the members of the senate, preceded by the vice-president, with a number of members of the house of representatives. Mr. Adams, in a plain suit of black, ascended the steps to the speaker's chair, and took his seat. Silence having been proclaimed, and the doors of the hall closed, the president elect rose and delivered his inaugural address to the assembled multitude, by whom it was received with great attention and interest.

After delivering this address, Mr. Adams descended from the chair, and placing himself on the righthand of the judge's table, received from Chief-Justice Marshall a volume of the laws of the United States, from which he read the oath of office, at the close of which, the house rang with the cheers and plaudits of the immense audience.

The senate being in session, the president immediately nominated the members of his cabinet, namely: Henry Clay, of Kentucky, for secretary of state; Richard Rush, of Pennsylvania, secretary of the treasury; James Barbour, of Virginia, secretary of war. These nominations were all confirmed, and unanimously, except that of Mr. Clay, to which a warm opposition was made on the part of a few senators, and the injunction of secresy being removed, the votes appeared to have been twenty-seven in favor, and fourteen against it. S. L. Southard, as secretary of the navy, and William Wirt, as attorney-general, were continued in office. John M'Lean, of Ohio, postmaster-general (not then a member of the cabinet), who had been appointed by Mr. Monroe, was also continued in office.

After disposing of the nominations made by the executive, the senate took into consideration the treaty made with the republic of Colombia, for the suppression of the slave-trade. This treaty was made in conformity with a resolution of the house of representatives, recommending to the executive to make treaties, giving the mutual right of search of vessels in suspected parts of the world, in order more effectually to prevent the traffic in slaves. The amendments proposed by the senate, at the last session, to the treaty with Great Britain, for the same purpose, were introduced into this treaty; but the fate of the treaty with England had probably caused a change in the minds of some of the senators, and other views had been taken of the subject by others, and the treaty with Colombia was rejected by 28 votes to 12.

The divisions which had been taken on the foregoing questions, in the senate, left little doubt that the new administration was destined to meet with a systematic and organized opposition; and previous to the next meeting of Congress, the ostensible grounds of opposition were set forth at public dinners and meetings, so as to prepare the community for a warm political contest, until the next election.

Those who placed themselves in opposition to the administration, without reference to its measures, urged as reasons for their hostility, that Mr. Adams's election was the result of a bargain between Mr. Clay and himself; and his selection of Mr. Clay as secretary of state, was relied upon as a conclusive proof of the bargain; that he was elected against the expressed will of the people; and that Congress, by not taking General Jackson, the candidate having the highest number of votes, had violated the constitution, and disobeyed their constituents. Personal objections were also urged, but as these formed no part of the justification of the opposition which was to be arrayed in anticipation of measures, it is unnecessary to give them a place. Those who were friendly to the new administration, or disposed to judge of it by its acts, replied to these objections, that Mr. Clay, as a representative, was obliged to decide between three candidates for the presidency, and that his vote was in accordance with all his previous declarations; that his own situation as a candidate who might possibly succeed, rendered it unsuitable for him to express any preference for either of the other candidates, until the decision of the legislature of Louisiana (first heard at Washington on the 27th of December) had left him free to decide between his former competitors; that Mr. Crawford, though constitutionally a candidate, was virtually withdrawn by the situation of his health, and that as between Mr. Adams and General Jackson, the previous deliberate expression of his sentiments as to the latter's character and qualifications for a civil office, rendered it impossible for him to vote for him without the most gross inconsistency; that Mr. Adams's experience, learning, and talents, were guaranties for his proper performance of the duties of the chief magistracy, which were not in the power of his competitor to offer; and that, having been compelled to discharge this duty as a representative of the people, it would have argued an improper distrust of his own character and of public opinion, to have refused to take the appointment of secretary of state from Mr. Adams, because he had contributed by his vote to elect him to the presidency. As to the fact of his selection as secretary of state, they vindicated it on the ground, that his situation as speaker of the house, and his long and intimate acquaintance with our national affairs, made him the most prominent candidate for that station, and the strong support he received in the west for the presidency, showed that his appointment would gratify a part of the Union, which, until then, had never been complimented with a representative in the cabinet.*

One of the most prominent topics of public interest during the year 1825, was the controversy between the national government and the executive of Georgia, Governor Troup. This controversy grew out of a compact between the general government and the state of Georgia in 1802. By that compact the United States agreed, in consideration of Georgia relinquishing her claim to the Mississippi territory, to extinguish, at the national expense, the Indian title to the lands occupied by them in Georgia, "whenever it could be peaceably done, upon reasonable terms." Since making that agreement, the general government had extinguished the Indian title to about fifteen millions of acres, and conveyed the same to the state of Georgia. There still remained 9,537,000 of acres in possession of the Indians, of which 5,292,000 of acres belonged to the Cherokees, and the remainder to the Creek nation.

Shortly before the termination of Mr. Monroe's administration, the state government became very urgent for the entire removal of the Indians from the state; and at the solicitation of the governor, the late president appointed two commissioners, selected by the governor of Georgia, to make a treaty with the Creeks for the purchase of their lands.†

But the Creek nation having began to enjoy the arts and comforts of civilization introduced among them by the government of the United States, were unwilling to leave their lands for the wilderness of the west, and passed a law forbidding the sale of any of their lands, on the pain of death. A few of the chiefs were induced to violate this law, by negotiating with the United States commissioners, after the breaking up of the general council of the nation, and by these chiefs, forming a fraction only of the acknowledged heads of the tribes, all the lands of the Creeks in Georgia and Alabama were ceded to the United States. This treaty, however, was transmitted to the United States senate, and ratified by them on the 3d of March, 1825, the last day of Mr. Monroe's administration. When the information that this treaty had been thus sanctioned, reached the Creeks, it produced great excitement, and a secret council of the nation being called, they resolved not to accept the treaty, and the death of M'Intosh, the chief of the party that assented to it, was determined on. This determination was carried into effect by a party of Indians, who surrounded his house on the 30th of April, and shot M'Intosh, and another chief who had also signed the treaty.

This course on the part of the Creeks presented a new question, and a controversy soon grew out of it between the general government and Governor Troup. The governor contended, that upon the ratification of the treaty, the fee simple of the lands became vested in Georgia, and subject to her authority. He therefore called the legislature of Georgia together, for the purpose of taking measures to cause a survey of the lands, and to distribute them among the white inhabitants of Georgia by lottery. These circumstances, and the remonstrances of the Creek chiefs against the treaty, induced President Adams to appoint a special agent to investigate the matter, and, at the same time, General Gaines, of the United States army, was ordered to repair to the Creek country with a competent number of troops, to restore tranquillity among the Creeks, and to prevent any disturbances between them and the frontier settlers. After an investigation by the agent into the facts, and receiving his report that bad faith and corruption had attended the treaty, and that forty-nine fiftieths of the Creeks appeared to be hostile to the treaty, the president decided not to suffer any interference with them until the meeting of Congress. Governor Troup at first threatened to take the execution of the treaty into his own hands, but the firm and decided tone of the president induced him to leave the affair to the constituted authorities.

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* American Annual Register.

† Ibid.

Although the president had thus resolved to protect the Indians in their rights, he was desirous to satisfy the claims of Georgia, and a new negotiation was opened with the Creeks, which finally resulted in annulling the former treaty, and the whole Creek territory within the limits of Georgia was ceded to the United States. By the new treaty, the Creeks retained all their lands in Alabama, which had been ceded in the one declared null. Notwithstanding the opposition of the Georgia delegation in Congress, the new treaty was ratified by the senate, at the ensuing session, by a vote of 30 to 7, and the appropriations were made by the house of representatives, by 167 votes to 10.

A treaty was also made with the Indians in the northwestern states and territories, by Governors Cass and Clark, at Prairie du Chien, in August, 1825. The negotiations occupied about two weeks, and a peace was concluded between the tribes, and the tomahawk finally buried, for the first time for nearly a century.

Another object of the government was, to remove the tribes scattered through the several states, to a tract of country west of the Mississippi, and to concentrate them into one nation, with some plan for their government and civilization. This plan was fully developed in a message of President Monroe, January 27th, 1825, in which its advantages were strongly depicted. With the constant superintendence and protecting care of the federal government, this scheme might be put in practice, and the annihilation of the original inhabitants of the American forest prevented. Without that care, the policy of bringing tribes with savage habits and inimical feelings into immediate contact, may be well doubted.

To carry this plan into effect, treaties were made with the Osages and the Kanzas Indians, extinguishing their titles to the territory west of the Mississippi, excepting to certain reservations for their own use. By these treaties, a tract was provided for those Indians who might be induced to emigrate from the states on the east side of the river. The Indians, however, were generally unwilling to remove, and at a meeting with some of the tribes of Ohio, in May, 1825, they refused to do anything to promote the views of our government. The Shawanee tribe in Missouri, however, exchanged their lands for a tract in the territory purchased from the Osages, and agreed to remove thither. Treaties of amity and protection were also made with most of the tribes in that vast tract betweeen Missouri and Mexico, by which the Indians permitted the United States to lay out a road through their lands, for the traders between those places, who had become numerous and entitled to attention.

The system proposed by Mr. Monroe, for the preservation and civilization of the aborigines, it was found impossible to carry into operation, on account of the reluctance of the Indians to dispose of more of their territory; a modification was therefore proposed by Mr. Barbour, the secretary of war, which was submitted to the nineteenth Congress. The outlines of this new plan were, to set apart the territory west of the Mississippi, beyond the states and territories, and that east of the Mississippi, lying west of lakes Huron and Michigan, for their exclusive abode, under a territorial government, to be maintained by the United States. Secondly, to induce them to remove as individuals, and not in tribes, and to leave those who do not wish to go, in their present circumstances. Thirdly, when circumstances should justify it, to amalgamate the tribes in one mass, and distribute their property among the individual Indians. Common schools to be established in the villages; assistance to be afforded them in commencing agricultural life; to furnish them with stock, grain, and fences; and to commute the annuities now paid to them, for a fixed sum, to be divided as individual property, were also recommended as the details of this system.

The benevolent views of the government were now prosecuted without interruption, and a visible improvement was yearly manifested in the condition of the remaining tribes. The appropriations made by the nineteenth Congress, at the first session, to the Indian department, for the civilization of the aborigines, and to fulfil the treaties made with them, amounted to nearly one million of dollars. The number of Indians in the several states and territories, appeared, by a report from the secretary of war, at the beginning of the year, to be about 130,000; of which about 97,000 were east of the Mississippi, and south of Michigan. Many of these were partially civilized, as the Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw nations in the south, and some of the eastern Indians, leaving only between forty and fifty thousand Indians whose removal could be effected with propriety.

Toward the Florida Indians, who were in a state of great suffering from want of food, the government manifested its usual humanity. A bill appropriating twenty thousand dollars to furnish them with the means of subsistence, was passed by Congress, and they were relieved from their distress.

During the last session of the eighteenth Congress, appropriations were made for surveying and laying out sundry important roads in Arkansas, Missouri, and Florida, and the secretary of the treasury was authorized to aid the Chesapeake and Delaware canal, by subscribing one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to its capital stock. An appropriation, already alluded to in our sketch of Mr. Monroe's administration, was also made for making surveys in different parts of the Union. The topographical corps, which had been enlarged, was actively employed during the summer in executing these surveys. The constitutional objections to internal improvements by the general government seemed to have been overruled by the decisions of several successive Congresses, and during this year the attention of the federal government was particularly directed to the improvement of the internal communications between the states.*

The Marquis de La Fayette having spent over a year in visiting the different parts of the United States, and been everywhere received with the utmost enthusiasm and affection by the people, took leave of his American friends in the month of September, 1825. A new frigate named the Brandywine, in honor of La Fayette, who distinguished himself in the battle at that place during the revolutionary war, was provided to transport him to France. On the invitation of President Adams, the " nation's guest" passed a few weeks at the president's house, in Washington, and on the day of his departure, the 7th of September, the president took leave of him in an eloquent and impressive address, in presence of the civil authorities of the District of Columbia, the heads of departments, and a concourse of citizens, assembled at the president's house to join in the affecting ceremonies. The parting address of Mr. Adams was delivered with great dignity, though with evident emotion, and produced a deep impression.

The first session of the nineteenth Congress commenced on the 5th of December, 1825, and continued until the 22d of May, 1826. Mr. Calhoun, the vice-president, took the chair in the senate, and Nathaniel Macon, of North Carolina, was chosen president *pro tem.* previous to the adjournment in May. A large proportion of the members of the house of representatives had been chosen before the election of president, and on account of the peculiar circumstances of that election, there was some doubt whether a majority would be found in the house in favor of the administration. On the second ballot for speaker, however, John W. Taylor, of New York, a friend of the administration, received 99 votes, against 94 for all others, and was elected. In the senate the administration had a decided majority, but it soon became obvious that in both houses the friends of General Jackson and Mr. Crawford, with few exceptions, were disposed to unite, and embarrass and defeat the measures proposed by the president and his cabinet, or by their friends in Congress.

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* American Annual Register.

Many of the most important of the suggestions in the president's message were not acted on during the session; other topics having occupied the attention of Congress, which were introduced apparently for the purpose of agitating the public mind on the subject of the recent election of president. Amendments to the constitution were proposed in the senate by Mr. Benton, of Missouri, to provide for a direct vote by the people, in districts, for president, and dispensing with the colleges of electors; and by Mr. M'Duffie, of South Carolina, in the house, providing for a choice of electors by districts, and preventing the choice of president from devolving on the house of representatives. Mr. Benton's proposition was accompanied with an able report, but no action was taken on it in the senate. A long and spirited debate took place in the house on the proposed amendments, in the course of which Mr. M'Duffie went into a history of the late election, censuring in severe terms the course of Mr. Clay and his friends, to which Mr. Trimble, of Kentucky, and others, replied in severe and pointed language, which caused a scene of great excitement. On the first resolution, which took the election from Congress, the house divided, 123 in the affirmative, and 64 in the negative. The second resolution, in favor of the district system, was rejected, by a vote of 101 to 91. The subject was then referred to a select committee of twenty-four, one from each state, which, at the close of the session, reported that they had not been able to agree upon any plan to prevent the election from devolving upon Congress, and, on request, the committee was discharged from any further consideration of the matter. The only effect of this attempt to amend the constitution was to excite the feelings of members, and to array them into parties for and against the administration, in a more decided manner, and compelled them, in some measure, to determine upon their ultimate course, before its measures had been fairly tried. About one third of the session was occupied in the discussion of the proposed amendments.

In the senate, a resolution offered by Mr. Macon, to inquire into the expediency of reducing the patronage of the executive, was referred to a committee of which Mr. Benton was chairman, who reported at length on the subject, and introduced six bills, in conformity therewith. An unusual number of copies of the report and bills was ordered to be printed for circulation among the people, and then the subject was left with other unfinished business.

The recommendation in the president's message, that the United States should take part in a congress of North and South American states, proposed to be held at Panama, was at this time the subject of great political interest, and much agitated in Congress at this session. In certain official conversations had in the spring of 1825, with the ministers of those powers, invitations were given, on the part of Colombia, Mexico, and Central America, to the United States, to send commissioners to Panama. The proposed congress at that place was supposed to have been first suggested by General Bolivar, who was for some time at the head of the republic of Colombia; and that Peru and Chili should also join in it. The views of Bolivar were, to form a close alliance, and to pledge mutual assistance to resist European governments.

Mr. Clay, the secretary of state, in replying to the communications from the ministers of the republics of Spanish America, remarked, that those communications were received with proper feelings of the friendly motives which dictated them; but that the United States could not take any part in the existing war with Spain, nor in councils for deliberating on its further prosecution; though the president believed that such a congress might be highly useful in settling several important disputed questions of public law, and in arranging other matters of deep interest to the American continent, and strengthening the bonds of friendship between the American powers; that it appeared to him, however, expedient, before such a congress met, to adjust, as preliminary matters, the precise objects to which the attention of the congress would be directed, and the substance and form of the power of the ministers representing the several republics. In reply to this suggestion, notes were received from them, stating the objects of the assembly, and formally renewing the invitation. The president determined to accept this invitation, and to send ministers to the congress, should the senate consent to the measure.

This determination he mentioned in his opening message to Congress, and on the 26th of December he sent to the senate a confidential message, setting forth the objects of the Panama congress; his reasons for accepting the invitation to send commissioners; and nominating Richard C. Anderson and John Sergeant as ministers on the part of the United States, and William B. Rochester, of New York, as secretary to the mission.

This message, with the accompanying documents, was referred to the committee on foreign relations, by whom a report was made on the 16th of January, 1826, condemning the mission, and ending with a resolution, declaring it to be inexpedient to send ministers to Panama.

It should be remarked, that the vice-president, Mr. Calhoun, who early gave indications of a disposition to act with the opposition, in thwarting the measures of the administration, was empowered, by the rules of the senate, to appoint all the committees of that body. In the exercise of that power he was careful to appoint a majority of those who were known to be unfriendly to the administration, upon most of the important committees. Committees thus selected necessarily brought in reports unfavorable to the measures supported by the friends of the administration. The inconvenience of this state of things induced the senate, at the latter part of the session, to take from the vice-president the power of appointing the committees. It was, however, too late to remedy the evils which had been produced by the attitude that the senate had been forced to assume, with respect to the executive, as well as the popular branch of Congress.

The report of the committee on foreign relations occasioned a long debate in secret session in the senate, and the resolution reported by that committee, condemning the Panama mission, was negatived by a vote of 24 to 19, on the 14th of March. The nominations by the president were then confirmed by the senate; and the injunction of secresy on the subject removed from the journal. Thus the administration was sustained in this measure by the senate; and in the house of representatives the bill making the appropriation for the mission, was carried, after a debate of many days, on the 21st of April, by a vote of 133 to 61.

The house having thus concurred with the senate in assenting to the policy of the mission, measures were taken to carry it into effect; and orders were transmitted to Mr. Anderson, who was then minister to Colombia, to attend the congress, which was to hold its first meeting in the month of June. In his way to Panama he was unfortunately attacked, at Carthagena, by a malignant fever, which proved fatal, and deprived the country of an able and useful representative.

The delay that had been occasioned by the long and protracted discussions to which this measure had been subjected, in both houses of Congress, thus prevented any representation of the United States in the congress at Panama; it having been found impossible for Mr. Sergeant to prepare, in the short time which remained after the decision of the house, before the meeting of the congress, for his departure, and the approach of the unhealthy season having rendered a journey across the isthmus to Panama peculiarly dangerous.

The representatives of Peru, Mexico, Central America, and Colombia, met there on the 22d of June, 1826. Upper Peru, or Bolivia, had not then organized its government, and was not represented, nor was the republic of Chili. The governments of England and the Netherlands, though uninvited, sent diplomatic agents, who were not permitted to be present during the deliberations of the congress, but communications were made to them of their proceedings.

The congress continued in session until the 15th of July, and concluded between themselves a treaty of friendship and perpetual confederation, to which all other American powers might accede within the year. The treaties between the assembled powers were recognised and renewed, and the meeting of the congress annually in time of common war, and biennially in time of peace, agreed upon. The next meeting was ordered to be held at Tacubaya, a village near the city of Mexico, in February, 1837.

Mr. Poinsett, United States minister to Mexico, was appointed commissioner to Panama in place of Mr. Anderson, deceased, and Mr. Sergeant, his colleague, repaired to Mexico, to be present when the congress should reassemble at Tacubaya. The congress did not assemble, however, at the appointed time, and there being no prospect of another session at any specified period, Mr. Sergeant returned to the United States. The causes of this unexpected issue of a measure which promised in its commencement to do so much to meliorate the condition of mankind, by diminishing the causes as well as the evils of war, it is believed, were occasioned by the internal commotions of Colombia and Peru, and the apprehension which existed in South America of the ambitious designs of Bolivar.*

The nineteenth Congress passed but few acts of general interest at their first session, nor was it distinguished by any important measures, excepting the sanction given to the Panama mission. Nearly all the propositions which were called for by the public voice, were defeated, either from want of time for their consideration, or by an influence which seemed to exert itself for the purpose of rendering the administration unpopular. This was, perhaps, to have been expected, in the state of parties as then existing, and the powerful combination which was forming for the purpose of overthrowing the administration.

The disposition of this Congress was, however, favorable to objects of internal improvement. In addition to fifty thousand dollars appropriated for general surveys, specific appropriations were made for the survey of a canal route across Florida, for sundry postroads, and for continuing and repairing the Cumberland road. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars were authorized to be subscribed on the part of the government, to the stock of the Dismal Swamp Canal Company, and three fifths of the five per cent. reserved from the proceeds of the public lands in Mississippi were given to that state for the purposes of internal improvement. Appropriations were also made for the survey of various harbors on the seacoast, and for the deepening of their channels, as well as to secure them from storms. The execution of these several acts for internal improvement was intrusted to the war department.

A bill making appropriation for the officers and soldiers of the continental army who had served during the war of the revolution, was introduced and ably advocated, but opposition and want of time caused its postponement.

To provide for the increasing wants of the people in the western states having business in the United States courts, a bill was reported by the committee of the judiciary, for two additional justices of the supreme court, and for holding circuit courts in the new states. This bill passed the house by a large majority, but the amendments proposed by the senate were not concurred in by the house, and thus the bill was lost. An appropriation of the public lands was made in all the townships belonging to the United States, where lots had not been previously set apart for that object. Authority was given at this time for preparing a treatise at the expense of the general government, on the culture of the silkworm, and of mulberry-trees, and for giving information on the manufacture of silk in the United States.

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* American Annual Register.

The discordance in the materials of the opposition prevented any harmonious concert of action and purpose at this first session of the nineteenth Congress, but during the vacation and the succeeding session, great progress was made toward a stricter union, and before the expiration of the term of that Congress, in March, 1827, the party had assumed a consistent shape. General Jackson was nominated by the legislature of Tennessee, as early as October, 1825, as a candidate for president, to succeed Mr. Adams. This nomination was formally accepted by him, in an address delivered before both branches of the legislature, in which he resigned his seat in the senate of the United States. The strong insinuations in this address against the propriety of the last election by Congress, plainly indicated General Jackson's dissatisfaction at the result, and manifested a willingness to sanction an opposition to the administration on the ground of its corrupt origin. The charge of corruption at the recent election, by bargain and intrigue between Messrs. Adams and Clay, was more directly countenanced by the general, in a letter to Mr. Carter Beverley, of Virginia, published in the papers in 1827. The adherents of the vice-president sustained the charge of corruption against the administration, in debates in Congress, uniting cordially in this and other respects, with the original friends and supporters of General Jackson.

That numerous portion of the opposition to the administration who had been attached to the political fortunes of Mr. Crawford, were still unwilling to adopt General Jackson as the next candidate for the presidency, in opposition to Mr. Adams; but it soon became apparent that no other course was left to them, if success was desired, but to acquiesce in his support. Accordingly, it was announced early in 1827, by a leading opposition member from Virginia, that the combinations for effecting the elevation of General Jackson, were nearly complete, and, in fact, greater concert was manifested in their party movements after that time.

The strong popular vote which, in despite of the efforts of the Adams, Clay, and Crawford parties, the general had received at the last election, probably had much effect in inducing the friends of Mr. Crawford to come to the conclusion to support him. It furnished, ready formed, a large capital which the Crawford party saw they could add to their own, simply by consenting to receive it. The united electoral votes for Jackson and Crawford, in 1824, they remembered, were 140, while those for Adams and Clay were but 121. They knew, too, that in the chivalric bravery of General Jackson, his brilliant success in the late war, and the many popular and fascinating points in his character, would, when supported by such a compact, disciplined association as was the Crawford party in many of the states, render this extraordinary man irresistible as a candidate before the people. If he was subject to rashness and precipitancy, they thought they could surround him with friends and advisers who would keep him within due bounds. True, the Crawford men had, in 1824 and 1825, manifested the utmost horror at the least prospect of his election, and Mr. Crawford himself was known to have expressed very unfavorable opinions of him; but a better knowledge of the man, and above all, a kind of political necessity, had materially changed their views.*

The charge of bargain and intrigue made by General Jackson and some of his friends, against Messrs. Adams and Clay, was met by Mr. Clay, the secretary of state, in a body of testimony, which was thought, by a large portion of the reading public, to overthrow the accusation against him, and convinced many that in voting for Mr. Adams, in the house of representatives, Mr. Clay and his friends conscientiously discharged their duty. Still, the opposition papers continued to dwell upon the charge, and doubtless many persons retained their original unfavorable impressions on this subject. But the opposition to the administration had now become so fully matured, that it no longer needed the aliment which had first given life and vigor to it.

The course of the administration itself, with regard to appointments to office, tended to promote the objects of the opposition, and to accelerate its own downfall. Following up the principle promulgated in his inaugural address, of administering the government without regard to party, Mr. Adams had only considered, in the candidates for offices, their qualifications and integrity, and had not inquired whether they were friendly or hostile to his administration. The correctness of this proposition as an abstract principle, is unquestionable; but the propriety of its application in practice, depends entirely upon the circumstances under which the government is placed; and it is in the application of general maxims to such circumstances that the sagacity of the statesman is developed. No doctrine of political toleration requires a prostration of the party in power at the feet of the minority. Such, however, was the effect of the policy adopted by the president, in his selection of public officers. From an over-anxiety to avoid the appearance of rewarding political partisans, he conferred such offices as became vacant upon those who either used the influence acquired from their stations, against the government; or who sought, by a cold neutrality, to conciliate the esteem of its inveterate opponents.

This hostile spirit also existed among many of those whom the administration found in office, and who were continued in their stations by its liberality.

In this manner, the influence derived from the patronage of the general government was exercised against it, rather than in its favor; and the singular spectacle was presented, of an administration openly and violently opposed by those whose influence in society, and whose very means of subsistence, were dependent upon its will.*

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* Hammond's Political History.

The members of the cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Clay, the secretary of state, were unable to bring to the aid of the administration the support and political influence that might reasonably have been anticipated. The friends of Mr. Clay, throughout the Union, with but comparatively few exceptions, gave a zealous support to the administration; but Mr. Rush, secretary of the treasury, and Mr. Barbour, secretary of war, who had been attached to the Crawford party, could not effect any important change in the political character of states so irrevocably hostile to Mr. Adams as Pennsylvania and Virginia. The secretary of the navy, Samuel L. Southard, who was appointed by Mr. Monroe, December 9, 1823, and continued in office by Mr. Adams, exercised his influence effectively in New Jersey, his native state, which had voted for General Jackson in 1824, but now supported the administration of Mr. Adams. Mr. Wirt, the attorney-general, was not an active politician, nor is it probable that he could have produced any important effect in Virginia. The postmaster-general, John M'Lean, although professedly neutral in the contest, was believed to prefer General Jackson to Mr. Adams. Thus unfortunately, in every point of view, was the administration placed; and to the eye of careful observers, its destiny, it appeared probable, was to endure only for the single term of four years.

The second session of the nineteenth Congress was held from the 4th of December, 1826, to the 3d of March, 1827. But few laws of an important or general character were passed at this session, though others were urged with great zeal and ability by several members. There was, at this period, a very strong feeling in Congress as to the theory and views of the executive; and with many a disposition to scrutinize closely the recommendations of the president. Some supposed his objects were visionary, and he was charged with entertaining such views of the constitution as that national internal improvements might justly be made, though there might be large expenditures in their execution.

An appropriation of thirty thousand dollars was made for repairs on the Cumberland road; lands were reserved for seminaries of learning in Louisiana, in Florida, and in Arkansas; and a grant of public lands was made to the asylum of the deaf and dumb in Kentucky. A bill was introduced in the senate by Mr. Dickerson, of New Jersey, an opposition senator, for distributing a certain part of the surplus of the public revenue among the several states. But the proposition was not received with much favor; and, after a short discussion, the bill was denied a second reading. The plan originated in a wish to maintain state power and rights, and to prevent great expenditures by the national government, which would naturally increase the influence and patronage of the latter.*

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* American Annual Register.

Great efforts were again made at this session of Congress for the passage of a bankrupt law. The bill introduced at the last session, by Mr. Hayne, of South Carolina, was now taken up, and ably discussed by the mover and others, but the bill was opposed, and finally defeated, on the pretence that it would operate particularly for the relief of merchants, and would be of no benefit to the other classes of citizens.

The subject of commercial intercourse with the British colonies was also discussed at great length at this session. It was one of peculiar interest and importance; for the trade with the British ports in the West Indies was so restricted by acts of parliament, that it could be pursued with but little profit by the citizens of the United States. Both branches of Congress had a bill prepared on this subject; they did not differ materially; but it was said in the house, that the bill before the senate did not fully protect the interests of American merchants trading to those ports; and no law was enacted, as was proposed and expected. The difference might have been adjusted by a committee of conference of both houses, as is usual in cases of disagreement; but this was not done in season, and the close of the session prevented it. And on the 17th of March, by virtue of a law passed three years before, the president declared, by proclamation, that the trade with those ports was prohibited; as the discriminating duties of the British government had not been removed.†

The sum of thirty thousand dollars was appropriated for improving the navigation of the Ohio river. Grants of the public lands were made to the states of Illinois and Indiana, to aid those states in making canals; also to the state of Ohio, for the purpose of aiding in the construction of a road from Columbus to Sandusky. For the gradual improvement of the navy the sum of five hundred thousand dollars per annum, for six years, was appropriated.

A bill for imposing additional duties on imported woollen goods, for the purpose of aiding American manufactures, was brought forward at an early day of the session. In February, 1827, near the close of the session, the bill passed the house, but it was rejected in the senate by the casting vote of the vice-president. President Adams was considered friendly to the system of protection to domestic manufactures by adequate duties on imports of similar articles, but in his messages to the nineteenth Congress he expressed no opinion on the subject, an omission which greatly dissatisfied the manufacturers.

A proposition was made in the house of representatives, to reimburse to those persons who had been fined under the sedition law of 1798, the amount which they had paid, and an indemnity for loss of time, &c.; but the proposition was not received with favor by the majority of the house, and the object of the mover was not attained. Another unsuccessful effort was made to pass a law for allowing compensation to the officers of the continental army who continued in service till the close of the revolutionary war. At the following session an act was passed making the desired appropriations for these veterans. When the term of the nineteenth Congress expired, there was a large amount of unfinished business of great importance laying on the table. Although the administration had a nominal majority of supporters in both houses, yet the course of the opposition greatly retarded the public business, and disheartened the friends of the administration.

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* Bradford.

† Ibid.

The elections for members of the twentieth Congress took place in many of the states, under a highly excited state of public feeling for and against the administration. Great efforts were made by the opposition leaders to secure a majority in the house, for the double purpose of checking the administration, and producing an influence on public opinion favorable to the opposition, in anticipation of the next presidential election. The states of Delaware and New Jersey showed changes from the opposition to the administration side. The president's friends were also sustained by the New England states, in Ohio, Indiana, and Louisiana. But these favorable indications were more than counterbalanced by adverse results in the elections in Kentucky and New York, Virginia, the Carolinas, and other southern states, except Louisiana; also Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Illinois, elected opposition members with few exceptions. The general result was the return of a majority of opposition members to the house of representatives; and this victory was soon followed by such an accession from those who were uncommitted in the senate, as to give a majority to the same party in that body.

The bill for increasing the duties on imported manufactures of wool having been defeated at the close of the last session of the nineteenth Congress, steps were immediately taken by the friends of the protective system, to bring the subject again before Congress, and a convention of delegates from many of the states, was held at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for the purpose of concentrating public opinion, and to obtain an harmonious co-operation in the measures to be taken for the encouragement of domestic manufactures.

It was determined at this convention to memorialize Congress, not only on the subject of an increase of duty on woollens, but on many other articles of manufacture. In short, a very general revision of the protective features of the tariff of 1824, with a view to augmentation, was agreed upon. The proceedings of the Harrisburg convention provoked much animadversion among the opponents of the policy, particularly in some of the seaport towns, and in the southern states, where the planters were very hostile to the protective system.

Such was the state of public opinion when the twentieth Congress assembled; and as it was generally believed that the course taken by the parties supporting and opposing the administration on this question, would materially affect their prospects of success, much anxiety prevailed concerning the view which the president might feel bound to take of this subject in his annual message.

The northwestern states, and Pennsylvania, were well known to be tariff states; and their votes, it was predicted, would depend entirely upon the division of parties upon this question.

Contrary to general expectation, no notice was taken of the subject in the opening message to Congress; but in the annual report of the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Rush, on the 10th of December, an elaborate view was taken of the manufactures of the country, and their encouragement and protection warmly recommended.

The first session of the twentieth Congress commenced on the 3d of December, 1827, and closed on the 26th of May, 1828. In the house of representatives two hundred and seven members were present, and on the first ballot for speaker, Andrew Stevenson, of Virginia, had 104 votes, John W. Taylor, of New York, had 94, and there were 7 scattering. The opposition speaker was thus elected. He had supported Mr. Crawford for president, in 1824, and his success as a candidate for speaker showed the union of the different sections of the opposition, and was regarded as a presage of the approaching downfall of the administration.

The committees of both houses, a majority of the senate being now of the same sentiments as the house, of course represented the political opinions of the opposition; and the administration was left without that support to which it was accustomed in Congress. The administration, therefore, had not a fair trial in public opinion. Not having a majority in Congress, its policy was not carried into full effect, and the country had not an opportunity of ascertaining by experience whether it was beneficial or not.

A large portion of the session was taken up in the discussion of resolutions which were introduced with the view of discussing the character of the administration, tending to convert Congress into a mere forum for political debate, and bringing the personal merits and demerits of the candidates for the presidency under consideration. Some of the reports of committees partook strongly of this partisan complexion.

Of the character referred to, was a resolution offered by Mr. Hamilton, an opposition member of the house of representatives, on the 8th of January, to inquire into the expediency of having an historical picture of the battle of New Orleans painted, and placed in the rotunda of the capitol. This resolution, which was regarded as intended for political effect, produced much discussion. It was finally rejected by the house, by 103 nays to 98 ayes.

This resolution was followed by one of a similar character from the other party. On the 11th of January, Mr. Sloane moved a resolution requiring the secretary of war to furnish the house with a copy of the proceedings of a court-martial held on the 5th of December, 1814, in a detachment of the army under the command of General Jackson, for the trial of certain Tennessee militiamen.

These men were tried for insubordination and mutiny, and having been found guilty, were condemned to be shot, which sentence was ordered by General Jackson to be carried into execution. It was supposed that the publication of the official records would prove the general to have been careless of human life, and render him unpopular, as the proceedings of the court-martial were not strictly formal. The introduction of this resolution caused much excitement in the house. It was, however, finally passed, with sundry amendments, and, with the documents furnished by the war department, referred to the committee on military affairs for examination. On the 11th of February the committee made a long exculpatory report, justifying the execution of these militiamen, which, by a vote of the house, 103 to 98, was ordered to be printed with the documents, in the order in which they had been arranged by the committee.

A long and exciting debate, of a party character, arose on the subject of certain resolutions submitted in January, by Mr. Chilton, a new member on the opposition side from Kentucky. These resolutions proposed an inquiry into the expenditures of the government, with a view to retrenchment. It did not appear that either party had been consulted by the mover in bringing them forward. After debating the subject for nearly two weeks, the house adopted, in lieu of Mr. Chilton's resolutions, others offered by Mr. Hamilton, to appoint a select committee to inquire and report in detail on expenses and retrenchment. The select committee was then appointed by the speaker, but Mr. Chilton was not placed thereon.

After a long and minute investigation, the committee, on the 15th of May, made a report on the subject referred to them, and the minority of the committee made a counter report.

These reports comprehended the whole subject of the discretionary expenditure of the executive part of the government, and contained a statement of the respective views and principles of the opposition and administration parties concerning the projected reform in the federal government.

Six thousand copies of these reports were ordered to be printed for distribution by the members, among their constituents, and this brought the question directly before the public for its decision. On one side, the augmented expenditure of the government was relied on to prove the extravagance of the administration, and on the other, this increase was shown to be a necessary result of the policy deliberately adopted by the nation. The continuance of this policy was, therefore, properly the question to be decided; but so much personal predilection and sectional prejudice entered into the contest, that this question, the real one in issue, was not fairly tried.*

The subject of a revision of the tariff on imports, with a view to additional protection to American manufactures, was brought before Congress at an early period of the session. The committee on manufactures, to whom the memorials on the subject were referred, on request, was granted power to send for persons and papers. Many manufacturers and others were examined by the committee, and on the 31st of January, after spending four weeks in these inquiries, they made a report, accompanied by the testimony taken, and a new tariff bill, in which an increased rate of duties was proposed on many articles of produce and manufacture.

The committee on manufactures which reported this bill was composed of two members friendly to the administration, and five of the opposition, but only one member of the committee was decidedly opposed to a protective tariff. It was asserted by the friends of the administration, that although six of the committee were apparently friendly to the tariff policy, two only were so in reality, and one only opposed, while the other members of the committee were disposed to use the question as a political engine; and that no law could be expected from a committee so constituted, but one which would be framed more with a view to affect public opinion in relation to the presidential election, than to advance the manufacturing interest.

The discussions on the tariff bill continued from the 12th of February to the 15th of April, various amendments proposed by Mr. Mallary, chairman of the committee which reported the bill, and a friend of the administration, having been rejected, and others, offered by him and others, being adopted; the bill finally passed the house by a vote of 109 to 91. The bill was avowedly made odious and oppressive to the country in some particulars, with a view of rendering the protective system unpopular; but the friends of protection came to the conclusion that the good qualities in the provisions of the bill relative to the manufacturing interest, more than counterbalanced other features deemed objectionable. They therefore, unexpectedly to many, supported the bill. In the senate, after sundry amendments, which were afterward concurred in by the house, the bill passed, by 26 ayes to 21 nays, and being approved by the president, became a law a few days before the adjournment. This tariff became very unpopular in the southern states, where the policy was denounced on all occasions as unconstitutional and oppressive. The law of 1828, however, continued in operation for about four years after its passage, namely, till 1832, when another revision took place.

At this session other propositions relative to the existing rate of duties on other articles were brought forward, chiefly with the view of affording some relief to the navigating interest. A bill reducing the duties on wines, passed into a law, after a close division in the house.

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* American Annual Register.

With the view of providing a remedy for certain difficulties in the process in the courts of the United States, a bill was introduced at the commencement of the session, regulating the process of federal courts in those states admitted into the Union since the year 1789. This bill, which was intended for the convenience of the new states, after considerable discussion, passed both houses and became a law.

The vice-president, Mr. Calhoun, having construed his powers as presiding officer of the senate, as not permiting him to preserve order in that body, it became necessary to pass some resolution declaring it to be within the scope of his authority. An amendment to the rules was accordingly offered at this session, declaring that every question of order should be decided by the president of the senate, without debate, subject to appeal to the senate.

This simple proposition excited a long and eloquent debate in the senate, in which the opposition generally sustained the view taken by the vice-president of his powers. They thought the authority proposed by the amendment to vest in the presiding officer, as of the most aristocratic character, and threatening the most alarming consequences. The amendment, however, was adopted, by a vote of 31 ayes to 15 nays.

The other business of the session did not possess much permanent interest. The tariff and the presidential election seemed to have absorbed the faculties, and engrossed all the attention of the members, and after a long and rather angry session, Congress adjourned on the 26th of May, without much regret on the part of the community, at the termination of its protracted debates.

The presidential election took place in the autumn of 1828, in the midst of a highly-excited state of public feeling, brought on by protracted discussions on the characters of the candidates for the presidency, and the political questions involved in the contest. These discussions had been carried on through the public press, and at assemblages of the people, in all parts of the Union. The most strenuous exertions were used by each party, and the contest was most animated. The result was the defeat of Mr. Adams, and the election of General Jackson as president, and Mr. Calhoun as vice-president, for the ensuing term of four years. In the electoral colleges the vote stood 178 for General Jackson, and 83 for Mr. Adams. The candidates for vice-president were Mr. Calhoun, who was re-elected by 171 votes (7 being given for William Smith, of South Carolina), and Richard Rush, who received the same vote as Mr. Adams. The number of electoral votes received by Mr. Adams, was one less than he received in 1824, while those given to General Jackson exceeded by one vote the united votes of Jackson, Crawford, and Clay, in 1824.

A change in the cabinet of Mr. Adams took place in May, 1828, Mr.

Barbour, secretary of war, having been appointed minister to England. General Peter B. Porter, of New York, was appointed secretary of war in his place.

The election having terminated unfavorably, Mr. Adams and the members of his administration turned their attention to closing the business committed to them, and to presenting to the nation a full and clear statement of the existing state of public affairs, before they gave place to their successors. This was done in the president's message, and in the reports from the different departments, to the 20th Congress, at their last session. That session was held from the 1st of December, 1828, to the 3d of March, 1829.

The president's message was an able review of the condition of the country, and of the condition of our domestic and foreign relations. It differed from his three former annual messages, in now discussing the subject of the tariff, which had before been omitted. A strong hope was expressed, that the exercise of a constitutional power intended to protect the great interests of the country from the hostile legislation of foreign countries, would never be abandoned.

Congress appeared inclined, this session, to provide only for the necessities of the government. The term of the existing administration was too short to allow it to do more than to bring its affairs to a close ; and the views and policy of the succeeding administration were not yet developed. Certain measures, however, affecting the navigating interest, were urged upon the consideration of Congress, and the policy of some of these was too obvious to be overlooked. The first of these propositions was a bill extending the term within which goods may be exported, with the benefit of drawback, without any deduction. Another bill allowed an additional drawback on the exportation of refined sugar ; both of these bills were passed and became laws.

A tonnage bill introduced in the house, more directly affecting the navigating interest, met with a less favorable reception. This bill proposed to repeal the tonnage duties upon American vessels, and all vessels placed by treaty on the same footing. It passed the house after considerable debate, but was rejected in the senate.

The twentieth Congress was liberal in appropriations for internal communications, by roads and canals, and improvements of the seacoast. The question of constitutionality, as well as the expediency of internal improvements by the general government, underwent a full discussion in the house, and the principle was deliberately sanctioned by majorities in both branches. A subscription of one million of dollars was authorized to the stock of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal company ; a grant of public lands to aid the state of Ohio in making a canal from the Miami river to Lake Erie ; and four hundred thousand acres were granted to the state of Alabama, to be applied to improvements by canal or otherwise, on the Tennessee river.

A bill was also introduced into the senate, which ultimately became a law, appropriating $250,000 for constructing a breakwater in Delaware bay; the construction of a military road in Maine, was also authorized, and $15,000 appropriated for that purpose.

A bill providing for a voyage of discovery and exploring expedition in the South seas and Pacific ocean, passed the house, but was lost in the senate. Bills of considerable importance, authorizing the president to expose to public sale the reserved lead mines and salt springs in the state of Missouri, passed both houses.

The main business of the session was the legislation on the subject of the Cumberland road. The house decided, by a considerable majority, in favor of both the constitutionality and expediency of erecting gates, and imposing a system of tolls, in order to keep the road in repair. The senate, without discussing the constitutional power, struck out the sections relating to toll-gates and the one hundred thousand dollars required to put the road in repair. Another bill passed both houses, appropriating money for the construction of the road westwardly from Zanesville in Ohio.

The appropriations for the public service did not occasion much discussion at this session. The excitement of the presidential election was followed by a reaction in the public mind; and the interest felt by the members in the arrangements for organizing a new administration, left but little inclination for a critical examination of the estimates for the ensuing year.

A treaty concluded with Brazil, recognising the liberal commercial principles of the United States, was not ratified until after the accession of General Jackson to the presidency, although it was completed under the administration of Mr. Adams.

The presidential contest having been decided, the business of Congress was transacted with less interruption from political discussion than usual, and this session was characterized by greater freedom from party asperity than the last.

"Thus terminated the administration of John Quincy Adams; and whatever opinion may be entertained of its policy, and its tendency, it can not be denied that its character was marked and definite; and that it exercised a strong influence upon the interests of the country. The merits and demerits of his policy were positive, and not negative. Certain definite objects were proposed as desirable, and the energies of the government were directed toward their attainment.

"The United States, during this administration, enjoyed uninterrupted peace; and the foreign policy of the government had only in view the maintenance of the dignity of the national character; the extension of its commercial relations, and the successful prosecution of the claims of American citizens upon foreign governments.

"It was, however, in the domestic policy of the government that the character of the administration was most strongly displayed. During its continuance in office, new and increased activity was imparted to those powers vested in the federal government for the development of the resources of the country; and the public revenue liberally expended in prosecuting those national measures to which the sanction of Congress had been deliberately given as the settled policy of the government.

"More than one million of dollars had been expended in enlarging and maintaining the lighthouse establishment; half a million in completing the public buildings; two millions in erecting arsenals, barracks, and furnishing the national armories; nearly the same amount had been expended in permanent additions to the naval establishment; upward of three millions had been devoted to fortifying the seacoast; and more than four millions expended in improving the internal communications between different parts of the country, and in procuring information, by scientific surveys, concerning its capacity for further improvement. Indeed, more had been directly effected by the aid of government, in this respect, during Mr. Adams's administration, than during the administrations of all his predecessors. Other sums, exceeding a million, had been appropriated for objects of a lasting character, and not belonging to the annual expense of the government; making in the whole, nearly fourteen millions of dollars expended for the permanent benefit of the country, during this administration.

"At the same time, the interest on the public debt was punctually paid. and the debt itself was in a constant course of reduction, having been diminished $30,373,188 during this administration, and leaving due, on the first of January, 1829, $58,362,136. While these sums were devoted to increasing the resources and improving the condition of the country, and in discharging its pecuniary obligations, those claims which were derived from what are termed the imperfect obligations of gratitude and humanity, were not forgotten.

"More than five millions of dollars were appropriated to solace the declining years of the surviving officers of the revolution; and a million and a half expended, in extinguishing the Indian title, and defraying the expense of the removal, beyond the Mississippi, of such tribes as were unqualified for a residence near civilized communities, and in promoting the civilization of those who, relying on the faith of the United States, preferred to remain on the lands which were the abodes of their fathers.

"In the condition which we have described, in peace with all the world, with an increasing revenue, and with a surplus of $5,125,638 in the public treasury, the administration of the government of the United States was surrendered by Mr. Adams on the third of March, he having previously left the governmental house, and relinquished the executive power. The next day General Jackson entered upon the administration of the government."*

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* American Annual Register.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

ANDREW JACKSON.

The ancestors of Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States, were among the emigrants from Scotland to the province of Ulster, in Ireland, at a period when it was the policy of the English government to promote the colonization of settlers from England and Scotland on the confiscated lands of the Irish. The family of Jackson was therefore of Scottish origin; and they were attached to the presbyterian church. Hugh Jackson, the grandfather of the subject of the present sketch, was a linen draper, near Carrickfergus, in Ireland. His four sons were respectable farmers; of whom Andrew, the youngest, married Elizabeth Hutchinson, and had in Ireland two sons, Hugh and Robert. The unfortunate condition of his native country induced him to dispose of his farm, and in 1765, with his wife and children, to emigrate to America, and settle in South Carolina. Samuel Jackson, a son of another of the brothers, at a subsequent period, emigrated to Pennsylvania, and became a citizen of Philadelphia.

Three of the neighbors of Andrew Jackson, named Crawford, emigrated to America with him, and the four emigrants purchased lands and settled in the Waxhaw settlement, South Carolina, near the line of North Carolina.

On this plantation of his father, at Waxhaw settlement, Andrew Jackson, the subject of this memoir, was born, on the 15th of March, 1767. His father died about the time of his birth, leaving his farm to his widow, and his name to his infant son.

Left with three young sons, and moderate means, Mrs. Jackson gave her two oldest a common school education, while the youngest she desired to see prepared for the ministry, and, at a proper age, placed him under the tuition of Mr. Humphries, principal of the Waxhaw academy, where he made considerable progress in his studies, including latin and

Greek, until interrupted by the events of the war of the revolution. Although but about eight years of age, when the first conflicts between the British and Americans took place, Andrew Jackson soon became accustomed to the stirring scenes around him, of the friends and neighbors of his mother training themselves for battle, and preparing to defend their homes from the attacks and ravages of the invading foe.

The British commanding officers in America having resolved to carry the war into the southern states ; Savannah, in Georgia, was taken in 1778, and South Carolina invaded in the spring of 1779. The militia were summoned to the field to repel them, and Hugh Jackson, the oldest brother of Andrew, lost his life in the fatigues of the service. A battle took place at the Waxhaw settlement, between the British and Americans, in May, 1780, when 113 Americans were killed, and 150 wounded. Considerable ammunition and stores fell into the hands of the enemy. In the Waxhaw meetinghouse, where the wounded were carried, Andrew Jackson, then thirteen years of age, first saw the horrors of war. The mangled bodies of his countrymen confirmed the impression made upon his youthful mind by the tales of English oppression and cruelty which he had so often heard from his mother and kindred, while relating scenes of tyranny in Ireland, from which his father had fled to find a retreat in America.*

In the summer of 1780, Andrew Jackson, being then but little more than thirteen years of age, in company with his brother Robert, joined a corps of volunteers, under the command of Colonel Davie, to attempt the defence of that part of the country against a body of British troops and tories who had penetrated into the interior of the Carolinas. Davie's corps was attached to General Sumter's brigade, and an action took place on the 6th of August, 1780, between the American troops and the British and tories, at a place called Hanging Rock. The corps of Davie, in which the young Jacksons fought, particularly distinguished itself, and suffered heavy loss.

Not being regularly attached to any military corps, on account of their youth, Robert and Andrew Jackson did not participate in many of the numerous affairs in which the Americans were engaged with the British during their long campaign in the Carolinas. They retired with their mother into North Carolina for some time, leaving their home on the approach of the British army in that quarter. In 1781, both of the boys were taken prisoners by a party of dragoons. While a prisoner, Andrew Jackson was ordered by a British officer to clean his muddy boots, which the young soldier refusing, he received a wound with a sword from the officer, and the wound left a scar which Jackson carried with him to his grave. His brother Robert, for a similar offence, received a wound on his head, from the effects of which he never recovered. The brothers were retained some time in

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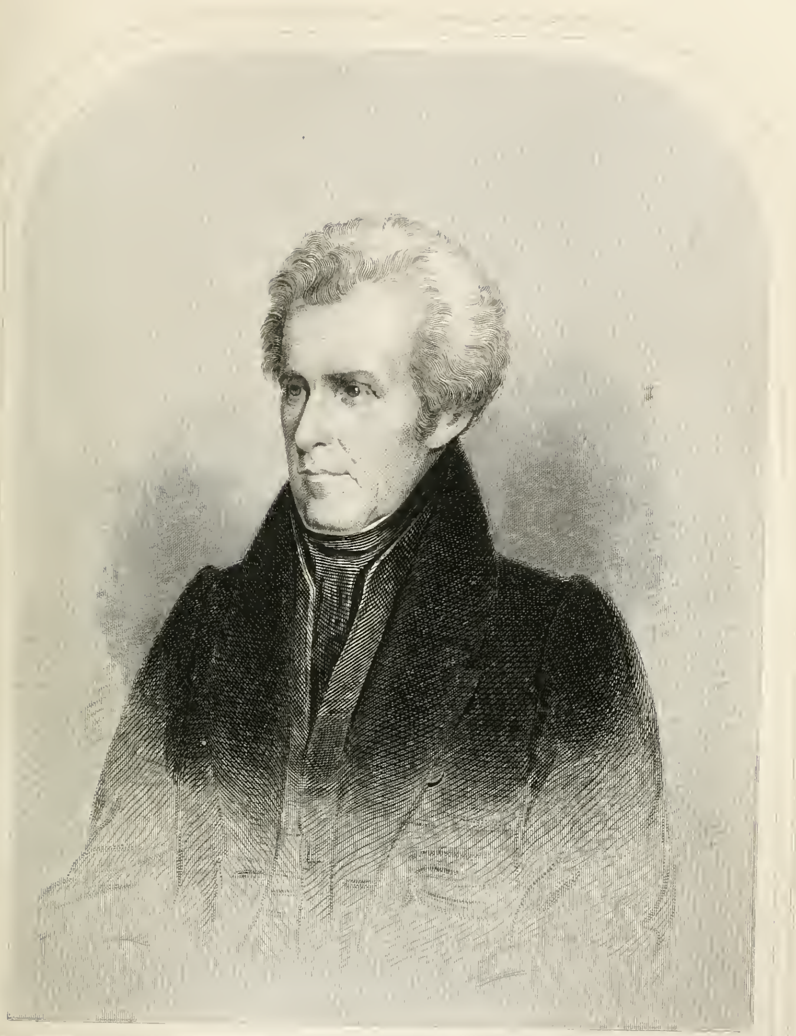
* For the facts in the first part of this memoir, we are indebted principally to Kendall's Life of Jackson.



Andrew Jackson

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

captivity, at Camden, where their sufferings were great from their wounds, and the small-pox, then prevalent among the prisoners. Being finally released, by exchange, the Jacksons, accompanied by their mother, returned home to the Waxhaw settlement, where Robert died in two days afterward. By kind nursing and the care of a physician, Andrew finally recovered from a dangerous sickness. His mother died soon after this, from the effects of a fever taken on board the prison-ship at Charleston, whither she went on an adventure of kindness and mercy, for the relief of some of her relatives and friends confined on board of that vessel. Thus every member of the Jackson family which came from Ireland to America to escape British oppression, perished through the effects of the same oppression in America. The only remnant of the family was an American-born son, who, through many perils, lived to be the avenger of his race.

At the close of the war of the revolution, Andrew Jackson was left alone in the world, his own master, with some little property, but without the benefit of parental counsel or restraint. At first associating with idle young men, he imbibed loose and extravagant habits, which he suddenly determined to reform. Changing his course of life, he commenced the study of law, at Salisbury, North Carolina, with Spruce M'Cay, Esq., then an eminent counsellor, and subsequently a judge of distinction. This was in the winter of 1784, when he was in his eighteenth year. He finished his studies under Colonel Stokes, and in a little more than two years he was licensed to practise law. Soon after this, without solicitation on his part, he received from the governor of North Carolina the appointment of solicitor for the western district of that state, embracing the present state of Tennessee.

At the age of twenty-one, in 1788, Andrew Jackson, accompanied by Judge McNairy, crossed the mountains to take up his abode in Tennessee, then the western district of North Carolina. For several months he resided at Jonesborough, then the principal seat of justice in that district. In 1789, he first visited the infant settlements on the Cumberland river, near the present site of Nashville. The settlers had at this time many difficulties with the Indians, who were then numerous and hostile to the whites. During this perilous period, Jackson performed twenty-two journeys across the wilderness of two hundred miles, then intervening between Jonesborough and the Cumberland settlements. He was frequently under arms, with other settlers, to protect parties of emigrants from the attacks of the Indians. He was also engaged in several expeditions against the Indians, in one of which, in 1794, the native town of Nickajack, near the Tennessee river, was destroyed. By his gallantry in these affairs, Jackson became well known to the Indians, who gave him the names of "*Sharp Knife*" and "*Pointed Arrow.*" He gained equally their respect and that of his companions, the hardy settlers of Tennessee.

Having determined to make the neighborhood of Nashville his permanent home, Jackson, with his friend Judge Overton, became boarders in the family of Mrs. Donelson, the widow of Colonel John Donelson, an emigrant from Virginia. Mrs. Rachel Robards, her daughter, who afterward became the wife of Jackson, was then living with her mother. This lady was celebrated for her beauty, affability, and other attractions. Her husband, Captain Robards, was a man of dissolute habits and jealous disposition. A separation took place, and Robards applied to the legislature of Virginia for a divorce; soon after, intelligence was received that his petition had been granted. Mrs. Robards was then at Natchez, on the Mississippi, and Jackson, considering that she was free to form a new connexion, in the summer of 1791 went down to Natchez, paid her his addresses, and was accepted. In the fall they were married, and returned to the Cumberland, where they were cordially received by their mutual friends.

In December, 1793, Jackson learned, for the first time, that the act of the Virginia legislature did not grant a divorce, but only authorized a suit for divorce in a Kentucky court, which had just been brought to a successful issue. Surprised and mortified at this information, on his return to Nashville, in January, 1794, he took out a license, and was again regularly married. The conduct of Jackson in this affair was considered, by those familiar with the circumstances, correct and honorable, and perfectly consistent with true morality. His friend and confidential associate remarks: "In his singularly delicate sense of honor, and in what I thought his chivalrous conception of the female sex, it occurred to me that he was distinguished from every other person with whom I was acquainted."

Jackson, after his marriage, applied himself with renewed diligence to his profession in the practice of the law. Circumstances connected with his professional business required the exercise of his firmness of character and courage, in no ordinary degree. There had been a combination of debtors against him, as he was employed by creditors for the collection of claims, which he succeeded in breaking down, but not without making bitter enemies. Bullies were stimulated to attack and insult him, and thus brought him into several personal contests, which generally ended in a severe punishment of the aggressors, by the bold and fearless Jackson.

In 1795, the people of Tennessee elected delegates to a convention for the formation of a state constitution, preparatory to admission into the Union. Of that convention Jackson was chosen a member by his neighbors, and took an active part in the formation of the constitution. The convention sat at Knoxville from the 11th of January to the 6th of February, 1796, and Tennessee was admitted into the Union as a state, by act of Congress, on the 1st of June, the same year. Jackson was chosen the first representative from the new state in Congress, and took his seat in the house on the 5th of December, 1796. His term expired on the 3d of March following, and he was prevented from continuing longer in that body, being elected by the legislature of Tennessee to the senate of the United States, where he took his seat on the 22d of November, 1797, being then only a few months over thirty years of age. He appears not to have been ambitious or anxious for political distinction at that time, for, after serving one session, he resigned his seat in the senate. During his short career in Congress, it is believed that he made no speeches; but in his votes he acted with the democratic party, opposing the administration of Washington at its close, and subsequently that of John Adams. While a member of the house, he was one of a minority of twelve democrats, among whom were Edward Livingston, Nathaniel Macon, and William B. Giles, who voted against an answer to Washington's last speech to Congress; because that answer expressly approved of the measures of Washington's administration, some of which were condemned by the democratic party. The state gave her first vote for president to Mr. Jefferson in 1796, which vote she repeated in 1800. In the political revolution which elevated Mr. Jefferson to the presidency, Jackson participated, and acted with the friends of Mr. Jefferson; but little effort was required, however, to secure the vote for the democratic candidates, in a state so uniformly devoted to that party as Tennessee.

At this period, the popularity of Jackson in Tennessee was equal, if it did not exceed that of any other citizen of the state. Soon after his resignation as senator, the legislature again honored him by conferring upon him the appointment of judge of the supreme court of the state. This office he accepted, and for a time performed the duties of the station; but, owing to ill health, he determined to resign and retire to private life. This intention he was induced to defer for the present, in consequence of remonstrances from members of the legislature and others, who entreated him to remain upon the bench.

The circumstances in which Jackson was placed, and his course in several public affairs, occasioned a misunderstanding between him and other leading men in Tennessee. Among those who became his enemies, were Judge McNairy and Governor Sevier. A personal quarrel with the latter occasioned a challenge from Judge Jackson, which was accepted by the governor, and the parties, without any formal arrangement, met on horseback, each armed with a brace of pistols, the governor having also a sword, while Jackson had a cane, which he carried as a spear. Putting spurs to his horse, he charged upon his antagonist in a bold and unexpected manner, and the governor dismounted to avoid the shock. The interference of the governor's attendants prevented any serious mischief, and by the intercession of mutual friends further hostile intentions were abandoned. The affair, however, occasioned sundry angry publications by the friends of the respective parties, which show the peculiar state of society then existing in the frontier settlements, where men holding the highest public stations were engaged in personal rencounters.

Previous to his affair with Governor Sevier, Jackson was appointed major-general of the militia of the state, viz., in 1802. His competitor was John Sevier, who was then also a candidate for governor. The votes of the officers by whom the appointment of general was made being equally divided, the decision devolved on Governor Roane, who gave it in favor of Jackson.

On the purchase of Louisiana from France, in 1803, by the United States, there were apprehensions of a difficulty with Spain, when the Americans should take possession of the territory. The Tennessee militia were called upon for aid in case of need, and by request of the secretary of war, General Jackson caused boats to be prepared to transport the troops to New Orleans ; but neither the boats, nor his own proffered services, were required, as the Spaniards made no resistance to the peaceful transfer and occupation of Louisiana.

In 1804, General Jackson, having served six years on the bench, resigned his office of judge of the supreme court. His biographer and friend, Mr. Kendall, remarks, that he " was not made for what is usually called a first-rate lawyer. His mode of reasoning would not permit him to seek for justice through a labyrinth of technicalities and special pleading. Yet few, if any, exceeded him in seizing on the strong points of a case, and with vigor and clearness applying to them the great principles of law. As a lawyer, in criminal prosecutions, the case of his client always became his own, and he was considered one of the most eloquent and effective among his contemporaries. As a judge, his opinions were always clear, short, and to the point, aiming at justice, without the affectation of eloquence, or of superior learning. His retirement from the bench gratified only those who feared his justice, while it was deeply regretted by a large majority of the community."

After his resignation as judge, General Jackson found that retirement which he had long desired. Having acquired a moderate fortune, he took up his residence on his plantation on the banks of the Cumberland, near Nashville, and not far from that which he subsequently occupied under the name of the Hermitage. His time was now devoted to the pursuits of agriculture, in one of the finest districts of country in the United States, and his house was always the abode of hospitality, where his numerous friends and acquaintance were received by him with a cordial welcome.

In addition to other pursuits on his plantation, much of General Jackson's attention was given to the raising of fine horses, from the most improved breeds of the southern states. He consequently became a frequenter of race-courses at the west, to bring out his favorite horses, and occasionally lost and won in the sports of the turf. These affairs led to one of the most unfortunate events of his life. In consequence of a quarrel, which ended in blows, between Jackson and Charles Dickinson, on the subject of a bet made at a horse-race, followed by an abusive publication on the part of Dickinson, charging Jackson with cowardice; the general sent Dickinson a challenge. The duel took place at Harrison's mills, on Red river, in Kentucky, on the 30th of May, 1806. The word being given, Dickinson fired first, his ball taking effect in Jackson's breast, and shattering two of his ribs; the next instant Jackson fired, although thus severely wounded, and Dickinson fell; he was taken to a neighboring house, and survived but a few hours. This melancholy affair caused much excitement in Tennessee at the time, and various publications on the subject appeared from the friends of the respective parties, and General Jackson himself; but the certificates of the seconds declared that the duel had been fairly conducted, according to the previous understanding of the parties. The firmness of nerve displayed by General Jackson in this duel was remarkable, considering that he was wounded before discharging his pistol. Some weeks transpired before he recovered from the effects of his wounds.

During the short period while General Jackson was a member of Congress, he had formed the acquaintance of Colonel Aaron Burr, who, in 1805, visited the western country, and spent several days at the residence of Jackson. Burr, in his journal, describes the general as "once a lawyer, after a judge, now a planter; a man of intelligence; and one of those prompt, frank, ardent souls whom I love to meet." The general treated him with great kindness and hospitality, and understanding that his object was the settlement of a tract of land in Louisiana, and the making arrangements for the invasion of Mexico, in case of a war with Spain, he rendered him such assistance as he could afford, and procured for him a boat to descend the Cumberland river.

In 1806, Colonel Burr again returned to the western country, and commenced preparations for an expedition. General Jackson offered to accompany him to Mexico with a body of troops, in case of a war with Spain; but declined holding communication with him if he had any hostile intentions against the United States. Burr assured him, in the most positive terms, that he had no such hostile design; but Jackson having his suspicions, the previous intimacy between him and Burr ceased. He afterward received orders from the war department to call out the military, if necessary, to suppress Burr's projects, and arrest Burr himself. Twelve military companies of the militia under his command, were ordered out by General Jackson, but as Burr had descended the Cumberland and Mississippi rivers, with only a few unarmed men, the general dismissed the troops, and reported his proceedings to the government.

After Burr was arrested and taken to Richmond, Virginia, for trial, on a charge of treason against the United States, General Jackson was summoned as a witness, but was not examined. He knew nothing tending to criminate the accused, and his evidence, if given, would have been in favor of Burr. It may be here remarked, that Colonel Burr's respect for General Jackson continued through life; and he always spoke of him as a man of integrity and honor. It is believed that he was the first to name him (though this was then unknown to the general himself), as early as 1815, in his private correspondence, as a suitable candidate for the presidency.

General Jackson continued in private life, attending to his agricultural employments, until the war of 1812 with Great Britain. Having become interested in a mercantile establishment in Nashville, the management of which he intrusted to his partner in that business, he became seriously involved in the debts of the concern, which he was compelled to close; and, for the payment of his debts, sold his residence and plantation. He then retired into a log-cabin, near the place since called "the Hermitage," and commenced the world anew. By a prudent and economical management of his affairs, he soon retrieved his pecuniary condition, and again became possessed of the means of comfort and enjoyment.

But a period approached when the pleasures and endearments of home were to be abandoned, for the duties of more active life. War with Great Britain was declared by the Congress of the United States on the 12th of June, 1812. General Jackson, ever devoted to the interests of his country, from the moment of the declaration knew no wish so strong as that of entering into her service against a power which, independent of public considerations, he had many private reasons for disliking. In her he could trace sufferings and injuries received, and the efficient cause why, in early life, he had been left forlorn and wretched, without a single relation in the world. His proud and inflexible mind, however, could not bend to solicit an appointment in the army which was about to be raised. He accordingly remained wholly unknown, until, at the head of the militia employed against the Creek Indians, his constant vigilance, and the splendor of his victories, apprized the general government of those great military talents which he so eminently possessed and conspicuously displayed, when opportunities for exerting them were afforded.

The acts of Congress on the 6th of February and July, 1812, afforded the means of bringing into view a display of those powers which, being unknown, unfortunately might have slumbered in inaction. Under the authority of these acts, authorizing the president to accept the services of fifty thousand volunteers, he addressed the citizens of his division, and twenty-five hundred flocked to his standard. A tender of them having been made, and the offer accepted, in November he received orders to place himself at their head and to descend the Mississippi, for the defence of the lower country, which was then supposed to be in danger. Accordingly, on the 10th of December, 1812, those troops rendezvoused at Nashville, prepared to advance to their place of destination; and although the weather was then excessively severe, and the ground covered with snow, no troops could have displayed greater firmness. The general was everywhere with them, inspiring them with the ardor that animated his own bosom.*

Having procured supplies, and made the necessary arrangements for an active campaign, they proceeded, the 7th of January, 1813, on their journey, and descending the Ohio and Mississippi, through cold and ice, arrived and halted at Natchez. Here Jackson had been instructed to remain, until he should receive further orders. Having chosen a healthy site for the encampment of his troops, he devoted his time to training and preparing them for active service. The clouds of war, however, in that quarter having blown over, an order was received from the secretary of war, dated the fifth of January, directing him, on receipt thereof, to dismiss those under his command from service, and to take measures for delivering over every article of public property in his possession to General Wilkinson. When this order reached his camp, there were one hundred and fifty on the sick report, and almost the whole of them destitute of the means of defraying the expenses of their return. The consequence of a strict compliance with the secretary's order, would have been, that many of the sick must have perished, while most of the others, from their destitute condition, would, of necessity, have been compelled to enlist in the regular army, under General Wilkinson.†

General Jackson could not think of sacrificing or injuring an army that had shown such devotedness to their country ; and he determined to disregard the order, and march them again to their homes in Tennessee, where they had been embodied. This determination met with the disapprobation of his field-officers and of General Wilkinson ; but persisting in his design, General Jackson marched the whole of his division to the section of country whence they had been drawn, and dismissed them from service, as he had been instructed. The sick were transported in wagons, at the same time. It was at a time of the year when the roads were bad, and the swamps, lying in their passage, deep and full ; yet the general placed before his troops an example of patience under hardships that lulled to silence all complaints, and won to him, still stronger than before, the esteem and respect of every one. On arriving at Nashville, he communicated to the president of the United States the course he had pursued, and the reasons that had induced it. His conduct was in the end approved, and the expenses incurred directed to be paid by the government.

The volunteers who had descended the river having been discharged, early in May, 1813, there was little expectation that they would again be called for. Tennessee was too remotely situated in the interior, to expect their services would be required for the defence of the state ; and thus far, the British had discovered no serious intention of waging operations against any part of Louisiana. Their repose, however, was not of long duration. The Creek Indians, inhabiting the country lying between the Chattahoochee and Tombigbee rivers, and extending from the Tennessee river to the Florida line, had lately manifested strong symptoms of hostility toward the United States. This disposition was greatly strengthened through means used by the northern Indians, who were then making preparations for a war against the United States, and who wished to engage the southern tribes in the same enterprise.

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* Eaton's Life of Jackson.

† Ibid.

An artful impostor had, about this time, sprung up among the Shawnees, a northern tribe, who, by passing for a prophet, had acquired a most astonishing influence among his own and the neighboring Indian tribes. He succeeded in a short time in kindling a phrensy and rage against the Anglo-Americans, which soon after burst forth in acts of destructive violence. His brother, Tecumseh, who became so famous during the war, and who was killed subsequently at the battle of the Thames, in Canada, was despatched to the southern tribes, to excite in them the same temper. To the Creeks, then the most numerous and powerful of the southern Indians, he directed his principal attention, and in the spring of 1812 he had repeated conferences with the chiefs of that nation. Deriving his powers from his brother, the prophet, whose extraordinary commission and endowments were, previous to this, well understood by the tribes in the south, his authority was regarded with the highest veneration. To afford additional weight to his councils, Tecumseh gave assurances of aid and support from Great Britain ; and having made other arrangements to carry out his plans, he returned to his own tribe.

From this time, a regular communication was kept up between the Creeks and the northern tribes ; while depredations were committed on the frontier settlers by parties of the allied Indians. In the summer of 1812, several families were murdered near the mouth of the Ohio, and soon afterward similar outrages were committed in Tennessee and Georgia. These acts were not sanctioned by the chiefs of the Creek nation, for, on application to them by the general government, the offenders were punished with death. No sooner was this done, than the spirit of the greater part of the nation suddenly kindled into civil war.

They first attacked their own countrymen who were friendly to the United States, and compelled them to retire toward the white settlements for protection. After this, they collected a supply of ammunition from the Spaniards at Pensacola, and, on the 30th of August, 1813, commenced an assault on Fort Mimms, in the Mississippi territory, which they succeeded in carrying, and put to death nearly three hundred persons, including women and children, with the most savage barbarity. Only seventeen of the whole number in the fort escaped, to bring intelligence of the catastrophe.

This monstrous and unprovoked outrage was no sooner known in Tennessee, than the whole state was thrown into a ferment, and immediate measures were taken to inflict exemplary punishment on the hostile Indians. The legislature, by the advice of numerous citizens, among whom were the governor and General Jackson, authorized the executive to call into the field 3,500 men, to be marched against the Indians. The troops were placed under the command of General Jackson, notwithstanding he was at the time seriously indisposed, from the effects of a fractured arm, owing to a wound received by him from a pistol-shot, in a fight with Colonel Thomas H. Benton, at a public house in Nashville.

The army under General Jackson marched into the Indian country in October, 1813. Crossing the Tennessee river, and learning that a large body of the enemy had posted themselves at Tallushatchee, on the river Coosa; General Coffee was detached with nine hundred men to attack and disperse them. This was effected, with a small loss on the part of the Tennessee troops, while the Indians lost 186 killed, among whom were unfortunately, and through accident, a few women and children. Eighty-four Indian women and children were taken prisoners, and treated with the utmost humanity.

Another battle with over a thousand of the Creeks, took place shortly after, at Talladega, thirty miles below Tallushatchee; the Tennessee troops being commanded by General Jackson in person; when 300 Indians were left dead on the field, and about as many more slain in their flight.

This campaign was protracted much longer than would otherwise have been the case, in consequence of the want of supplies of provisions for the army, which caused large numbers of the troops to return to their homes. Having at length obtained supplies, and being joined by more troops, General Jackson advanced still further into the enemy's country. Several battles took place with the Indians, the most sanguinary of which was that of Tohopeka or the Horseshoe, at the bend of the Tallapoosa river. On that occasion, 557 warriors, of 1,000 in the engagement, were found dead on the field, besides many others who were killed and thrown into the river, while the battle raged, or shot in attempting to escape by swimming. Over 300 prisoners were taken, all, but three or four, women and children. In this and other battles, the whites were assisted by a considerable body of friendly Creek and Cherokee Indians, who engaged in pursuing and destroying their fugitive countrymen with the most unrelenting rigor; "a circumstance," says Eaton, in his life of Jackson, "which the patriot must ever view with abhorrence; and although, from necessity or policy, he may be compelled to avail himself of the advantages afforded by such a circumstance, he can never be induced either to approve or justify it."

The battle of the Horsehoe gave a deathblow to the hopes of the Indians; nor did they venture afterward to make a stand. The principal chiefs came in, made their submission to General Jackson, and sued for peace; the campaign was ended, and the troops were marched back to Tennessee and discharged.

In May, 1814, General Jackson received the appointment of major-general in the army of the United States, on the resignation of General Harrison. Previous to this appointment, a commission as brigadier and brevet major-general had been forwarded to General Jackson, but his commission for the higher office being received the day after the notification of the other, he had not sent his answer to the war department, and the appointment of major-general was accepted.

The contest with the Indians being ended, the first and principal object of the government was, to enter into some definite arrangement which should deprive of success any effort that might thereafter be made, by other powers, to enlist those savages in their wars. None was so well calculated to answer this end, as that of restricting their limits, so as to cut off their communication with British and Spanish agents, in East and West Florida.

No treaty of friendship or boundary had yet been entered into by the government with the Indians; they remained a conquered people, and within the limits, and subject to the regulations and restrictions which had been prescribed in March, 1814, by General Jackson, when he retired from the country. He was now, by the government, called upon to act in a new and different character, and to negotiate the terms upon which an amicable understanding should be restored between the United States and these conquered Indians. Colonel Hawkins, who for a considerable time past had been the agent to the Creek nation, was also associated in the mission.

On the 10th of July, 1814, General Jackson, with a small retinue, reached the Alabama; and on the 10th of August succeeded in procuring the execution of a treaty, in which the Indians pledged themselves no more to listen to foreign emissaries—to hold no communication with British or Spanish garrisons; guarantied to the United States the right of erecting military posts in their country, and a free navigation of all their waters. They stipulated also, that they would suffer no agent or trader to pass among them, or hold any kind of commerce or intercourse with the nation, unless specially deriving his authority from the president of the United States.*

The treaty also settled the boundary and defined the extent of territory secured to the Creeks, and that which they were required to surrender. Sufficient territory was acquired on the south by the United States, to give security to the Mobile settlements, and to the western borders of Georgia, effectually cutting off the communication of the Creeks with the Chickasaws and Choctaws, and separating them from the Seminole tribes and other unfriendly Indians in Florida.

The retreat of the savages in Florida had been always looked upon as a place whence the United States might apprehend serious difficulties to arise. General Jackson entertained the belief that the British, through this channel, with the aid of the Spanish governor, had protected the Indians, and supplied them with arms and ammunition. He received certain information, when on his way to negotiate the treaty with the Indians, that about three hundred English troops had landed; were fortifying themselves at the mouth of the Apalachicola, and were endeavoring to excite the Indians to war. No time was lost in giving the government notice of what was passing, and of the course he deemed advisable to be pursued. The advantages to be secured from the possession of Pensacola he had frequently urged. But the government were unwilling to encounter the risk of a rupture with Spain, by authorizing the United States troops to enter her territory, while she occupied a neutral position, and Jackson was unable to obtain any answer to his repeated and pressing applications to be allowed to make a descent upon Pensacola, and reduce it, which, he gave it as his opinion, would bring the war in the south to a speedy termination. The secretary of war, General Armstrong, however, wrote him a letter on the 18th of July, 1814, which Jackson did not receive until the 17th of January, 1815, after the war was over, in which he remarked, that, "If the Spanish authorities admit, feed, arm, and co-operate with the British and hostile Indians, we must strike, on the broad principle of self-preservation; under other and different circumstances we must forbear."

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* Eaton.

The general, afterward speaking of this transaction, remarked: "If this letter, or any hint that such a course would have been winked at by the government, had been received, it would have been in my power to have captured the British shipping in the bay. But acting on my own responsibility, against a neutral power, it became essential for me to proceed with more caution than my judgment or wishes approved, and consequently, important advantages were lost, which might have been secured."

Having ascertained, through some Indian spies, that a considerable English force had arrived in Florida, and that muskets and ammunition had been given to the Indians, General Jackson wrote to the Spanish governor of Pensacola, apprizing him of the information received, and demanding the surrender to him of such chiefs of the hostile Indians as were with him. The governor, after some delay, replied to this letter, denying that any hostile Indians were with him at that time; nor could he refuse those Indians assistance, on the ground of hospitality, when their distresses were so great, or surrender them without acting in open violation of the laws of nations. He also demanded to be informed, if the United States were ignorant that, at the conquest of Florida, there was a treaty between Great Britain and the Creek Indians, and whether they did not know that it still existed between Spain and those tribes. In the same letter, the governor accused the United States government of having harbored traitors from the

Mexican provinces, and of countenancing pirates who had committed robberies upon the merchant-vessels of Spain.

The general answered this letter by another equally high-toned, in which, among other things, he says: "Your excellency has been candid enough to admit your having supplied the Indians with arms. In addition to this, I have learned that a British flag has been seen flying on one of your forts. All this is done, while you are pretending to be neutral. You can not be surprised, then, but, on the contrary, will provide a fort in your town for my soldiers and Indians, should I take it in my head to pay you a visit.

"In future, I beg you to withhold your insulting charges against my government, for one more inclined to listen to slander than I am; nor consider me any more as a diplomatic character, unless so proclaimed to you from the mouths of my cannon."

Captain Gordon, who had been despatched to Pensacola, on his return, reported to the general, that he had seen from one hundred and fifty to two hundred officers and soldiers, a park of artillery, and about five hundred Indians, under the drill of British officers, armed with new muskets, and dressed in the English uniform.

Jackson directly brought to the view of the government the information he had received, and again urged his favorite scheme, the reduction of Pensacola. Many difficulties were presented; but, to have all things in a state of readiness for action, when the time should arrive to authorize it, he addressed the governors of Tennessee, Louisiana, and the Mississippi territory, informing them of the necessity of holding all the forces allotted for the defence of the southwestern military district, in a state of readiness to march at any notice, and to any point where they might be required. The warriors of the different Indian tribes were ordered to be marshalled, and taken into pay of the government.

On the day after completing his business at Fort Jackson, he departed for Mobile, to place the country in a state of defence. He had already despatched his adjutant-general, Colonel Butler, to Tennessee, with orders to raise volunteers; and on the 28th September, 1814, two thousand able-bodied men, well supplied with rifles and muskets, assembled under the command of General Coffee, at Fayetteville, Tennessee, to march for Mobile, a distance of at least four hundred miles. The regular forces, lately enlisted, marched from Nashville to Mobile in about fourteen days.

As General Jackson kept his own determination a secret, the idea could scarcely be entertained, that at this time he intended to advance against Pensacola on his own responsibility. He was not long in doubt as to the course proper to be pursued. Colonel Nicholls had arrived in August at that place, with a squadron of British ships, and taken up his quarters with the Spanish governor, Manrequez. He issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of the southwest, inviting them to join the British standard

After waiting two weeks, he made an unsuccessful attack on Fort Bowyer, which commanded the entrance to Mobile bay. The fort was defended by Major Lawrence in so gallant a manner, that the British were compelled to retire, with the loss of one of their ships and about two hundred men.

The British retired to Pensacola, and General Jackson determined, on his own responsibility, to enter Florida and take that town. General Coffee, with about twenty-eight hundred men, had arrived at Fort St. Stephens, on the Mobile river. General Jackson repaired to Coffee's camp, and made the necessary arrangement for marching into Florida. The quartermasters were destitute of funds, and the government credit was insufficient to procure supplies for the army. Thus situated, from his own limited funds, and loans effected on his credit and responsibility, he succeeded in carrying his plans into effect, and in hastening his army to the place of its destination.

The difficulty of subsisting cavalry on the route, rendered it necessary that part of the brigade should proceed on foot. Although they had volunteered in the service as mounted men, and expected that no different disposition would be made of them, yet they cheerfully acquiesced in the order; and one thousand, abandoning their horses, to subsist as they could, on the reeds that grew along the river-bottoms, prepared to commence their march. Being supplied with rations for the trip, on the 2d day of November the line of march was taken up, and Pensacola was reached on the 6th. The British and Spaniards had obtained intelligence of their approach and intended attack, and everything was in readiness to dispute their passage to the town. The forts were garrisoned, and prepared for resistance ; batteries formed in the principal streets ; and the British vessels moored within the bay, and so disposed as to command the main entrances which led to Pensacola.

The American army consisting of Coffee's brigade, the regulars, and a few Indians, in all about 3,000 men, had arrived within a mile and a half of the town, and formed their encampment. Before any final step was taken, General Jackson concluded to make a further application to the governor, and to learn of him what course, at the present moment, he would make it necessary for him to pursue. Major Piere was accordingly despatched with a flag, to disclose the object of the visit, and to require that the different forts, Barancas, St. Rose, and St. Michael, should be immediately surrendered, to be garrisoned and held by the United States, until Spain, by furnishing a sufficient force, might be able to protect the province, and preserve her neutral character.

This mission experienced no very favorable result. Major Piere, on approaching St. Michael's, was fired on, and compelled to return. The Spanish flag was displayed on the fort, and under it the outrage was committed, although the British flag had been associated with it until the day before. Notwithstanding this unprovoked outrage, General Jackson acted with forbearance, and sent another letter to the governor, asking an explanation. In answer, the governor stated that what had been done was not properly chargeable on him, but on the English; and he assured the general of his perfect willingness to receive any overtures he might be pleased to make.

Major Piere was again despatched to meet the offer of the governor. The surrender of the fortifications and munitions of war was demanded, to be receipted for, and become the subject of future arrangement by the respective governments. The governor, after advising with his council, rejected the propositions; and as soon as the answer was received by Jackson, he resolved to urge his army forward, and, immediately commencing his march, proceeded to the accomplishment of his object, determined to effect it, in despite of danger and of consequences.

The American army was in motion early in the morning of the 7th of November. Pushing forward, they were soon in the streets, and sheltered by the houses from the cannon of the British vessels in the harbor. Captain Laval, who commanded the advance, fell severely wounded, while he was charging a Spanish battery. From behind the houses and garden fences, constant volleys of musketry were discharged, until the regulars arriving, met the Spaniards, and drove them from their positions.

The governor, panic-struck, and trembling for the safety of the city, hastened, bearing a flag in his hand, to find the commander, and seek to stay the carnage, and promised to consent to whatever terms might be demanded of him.

No time was lost by General Jackson in procuring what was considered by him of vital importance—the surrender of the forts. A capitulation was agreed on the next day; Pensacola and the different fortresses were to be retained by the United States, until Spain could better maintain her authority; while the rights and privileges of her citizens were to be regarded and respected.

Everything was in readiness the next day to take possession of Barancas fort, fourteen miles west of Pensacola. The American troops were ready for marching, when a tremendous explosion gave notice that all was destroyed. It was ascertained that the fort had been blown up, and that the British shipping had retired from the bay. On their retreat from Pensacola, the British carried off with them three or four hundred slaves, in spite of the remonstrances of the owners.

The American loss in this expedition was quite inconsiderable. The left column alone met resistance, and had fifteen or twenty wounded—none killed. Captain Laval and Lieutenant Flournoy were among the number wounded.

Deeming it unnecessary to think of garrisoning and attempting to hold the forts in Florida, Jackson concluded to redeliver all that had been surrendered, and retire from the territory. Two days, therefore, after entering Pensacola, he abandoned it. He wrote to the Spanish governor, concluding as follows: "The enemy has retreated; the hostile Creeks have fled to the forest; and I now retire from your town, leaving you to occupy your forts and protect the rights of your citizens."

It had been for some time rumored and generally accredited, that a very considerable force might be expected from England, destined to act against some part of the United States, most probably New Orleans. The importance of this place was well known to the enemy; it was the key to the entire commerce of the western country. Had a descent been made upon it a few months before, it might have been taken with all imaginable ease; but the British had confidently indulged the belief that they could possess it at any time, without much difficulty.

There was nothing now so much desired by General Jackson, as to be able to depart for New Orleans, where he apprehended the greatest danger, and where he believed his presence was most material. He had already effected a partial security for Mobile, and the inhabitants in that vicinity. His health was still delicate, which almost wholly unfitted him for the duties he had to encounter; but his constant expectation of a large force appearing on the coast, impelled him to action. General Coffee and Colonel Hinds, with their mounted men, were ordered to march, and take a position convenient to New Orleans, where they could find forage for their horses. Everything being arranged, and the command at Mobile left with General Winchester, Jackson on the 22d of November, left Mobile for New Orleans, where he arrived on the 1st of December, and where his headquarters were for the present established.*

General Jackson was now on a new theatre, and soon to be brought in collision with an enemy different from any he had yet encountered; the time had arrived to call forth all the energies he possessed. His body worn down by sickness and exhaustion, with a mind constantly alive to the apprehension, that, with the means given him, it would not be in his power to satisfy his own wishes, and the expectations of his country, were circumstances well calculated to depress him.

Louisiana, he well knew, was ill supplied with arms, and contained a mixed population, of different tongues, and doubtful as to their attachment to the government of the United States. No troops, arms, or ammunition, had yet descended from the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. His only reliance for defence, if suddenly assailed, was on the few regulars he had, the volunteers of General Coffee, and such troops as the state itself could furnish. Although continually agitated by gloomy forebodings, he breathed his fears to none. He appeared constantly serene, endeavored to impress a general belief that the country could and would be successfully defended. This apparent tranquillity and avowed certainty of success in the general, excited strong hopes, dispelled everything like fear, and impressed all with additional confidence.

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* Eaton.

While engaged in his operations on the Mobile, he had kept up a correspondence with Governor Claiborne, of Louisiana, urging him to the adoption of measures for the defence of the state. He had also forwarded an address to the people of Louisiana, endeavoring to excite them to a defence of their rights and liberties. Preparations for collecting troops in sufficient strength to repel an invasion, had been actively carried forward. The secretary of war had called upon the governors of Kentucky and Tennessee for quotas of the militia of those states, which requisitions were promptly answered by the governors, and the troops embarked for New Orleans, in November.

While the troops from the upper country were expected, General Jackson was active in adopting such measures as could be earliest effected, and which were best calculated for resistance and defence. The volunteer corps of the city, and other militia, were reviewed, the forts in the vicinity visited, to ascertain their situation and capacity for defence, and new works were erected on the banks of the Mississippi, below the city. Having endeavored, without success, to induce the legislature of Louisiana promptly to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus*, and sensible that delay was dangerous, he assumed the responsibility, and superseded their deliberations, by declaring the city and environs of New Orleans under martial law.

The expected British force appeared off Pensacola, early in December, and on the 22d effected a landing of their troops, about fifteen miles southeast of New Orleans. The American gunboats on Lake Borgne, only five in number, were previously attacked by a force of forty-three British boats, and captured, after a gallant defence, on the 14th of December.

With the exception of the Kentucky troops, 2,250 in number, all the forces expected had arrived previous to the 21st of December. The Kentucky troops arrived on the 4th of January. The Tennessee troops, under General Carroll, were about 2,500 in number. The remaining portion of the American forces consisted of Coffee's brigade of mounted men, the Mississippi dragoons, the Louisiana militia, two regiments of United States regular troops, and a company of marines and artillery.

On the approach of the enemy being announced to General Jackson, on the 22d of December, he resolved to march, and that night give them battle. He therefore advanced, at the head of about 2,000 men, and the following day a battle took place with a detachment of about 2,500 of the British army, nine miles below New Orleans. The enemy's force was increased during the day to four or five thousand, with which the Americans maintained a severe conflict of more than an hour, and retired in safety from the ground; with the loss of but 24 killed, 115 wounded, and 74 made prisoners, while the British loss, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, was about 400.

General Jackson now withdrew his troops to his intrenchments, four miles below the city. On the 28th of December, and the 1st of January, these were vigorously cannonaded by the enemy, but without success.

On the morning of the 8th of January, General Pakenham, commander-in-chief of the British, advanced against the American intrenchments with the main body of his army, numbering more than twelve thousand men.

Behind their breastworks of cotton bales, which no balls could penetrate, six thousand Americans, mostly militia, but the best marksmen in the land, silently awaited the attack. When the advancing columns had approached within reach of the batteries, they were met by an incessant and destructive cannonade ; but, closing their ranks as fast as they were opened, they continued steadily to advance, until they came within reach of the American musketry and rifles. The extended American line now presented one vivid stream of fire, throwing the enemy into confusion, and covering the plain with the wounded and the dead.*

In an attempt to rally his troops, General Pakenham was killed ; General Gibbs, the second in command, was mortally wounded, and General Keene severely. The enemy now fled in dismay from the certain death which seemed to await them. General Lambert, on whom the command devolved, being unable to check the flight of the troops, retired to his encampment. On the 18th, the whole British army hastily withdrew, and retreated to their shipping.

The heartfelt joy at the glorious victory achieved on one side of the river was clouded by the disaster witnessed on the other. A small body of the American forces was stationed on the right bank of the river. They were attacked by eight hundred chosen British troops, under Colonel Thornton, and compelled to retreat.

The loss of the British in the main attack on the left bank has been variously stated. The killed, wounded, and prisoners, ascertained on the next day after the battle, by Colonel Hayne, the inspector-general, places it at 2,600 ; General Lambert's report to Lord Bathurst makes it 2,070. The loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was but thirteen.†

On the 20th of January, 1815, General Jackson, with his army, returned to New Orleans. The general glow excited at beholding his entrance into the city, at the head of a victorious army, was manifested by all those feelings which patriotism and sympathy inspire. All greeted his return, and hailed him as their deliverer. The 23d was appointed a day of thanksgiving. Jackson repaired to the cathedral, which was crowded to excess. Children, robed in white, strewed his way with flowers, and an ode was recited as he passed. A *Te Deum* was sung, and Bishop Dubourg delivered an address, which he concluded by presenting the general with a wreath of laurel.

Martial law still prevailed in New Orleans, and in February General

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* Wilson's United States.

† Eaton.

Jackson arrested Mr. Louallier, a member of the legislature, on a charge of exciting mutiny among his troops, by a publication, on the 10th of February, in the Louisiana Gazette, stating that a treaty of peace had been signed. Louallier applied to Judge Hall for a writ of habeas corpus, which was immediately granted. Instead of obeying the writ, the general arrested the judge, and sent him from the city on the 11th of February. On the 13th of the same month, an express reached headquarters, from the war department at Washington city, announcing the conclusion of peace between Great Britain and the United States, and directing a cessation of hostilities. The previous unofficial intelligence on the 10th had been received by Mr. Livingston, through Admiral Cochrane, of the British fleet.

On being restored to the exercise of his functions, Judge Hall ordered General Jackson to appear before him, to show cause why an attachment for contempt should not be awarded, on the ground that he had refused to obey a writ issued to him, detained an original paper belonging to the court, and imprisoned the judge. The general obeyed the summons, and appeared in court in the garb of a citizen, to receive the sentence of the court, having previously made a written defence. The judge sentenced the general to pay a fine of one thousand dollars, which he paid. A sum was soon raised by the people, to relieve him from the payment, but he declined to receive it. The amount, with interest, was subsequently refunded to Jackson, by act of Congress, in 1844.

The war being ended, and the militia having been discharged, and returned to their homes, General Jackson left New Orleans for Nashville, where he arrived in May, 1815, and was received by his fellow-citizens with the most cordial feelings. An address was delivered at the court-house, in behalf of the citizens, welcoming his return. He then retired to his family residence, to repair a broken constitution, and to enjoy that repose to which, for eighteen months, he had been a stranger.

The annunciation of the triumphant defence of New Orleans was, in every section of the United States, hailed with acclamation. The legislatures of many of the states voted to him their approbation and thanks, for what he had done. The Congress of the United States did the same, and directed a gold medal to be presented to him, commemorative of the event.

The president, on the resignation of General Thomas Pinckney, in 1815, appointed General Jackson commander-in-chief of the southern division of the United States. Toward the close of the autumn of 1815, he visited Washington city, and on his way met with continued demonstrations of respect from the people. At this period, Colonel Burr wrote from New York, to his son-in-law, Ex-Governor Alston, of South Carolina, dated November 20, 1815, recommending the adoption of measures to bring forward the nomination of General Jackson, as a candidate for president of the United States, previous to the nomination of James Monroe by a congressional caucus, which was then anticipated to take place in December following. "Nothing is wanting," says Burr, "but a respectable nomination before the proclamation of the Virginia caucus, and Jackson's success is inevitable. Jackson is on his way to Washington. If you should have any confidential friend among the members of Congress from your state, charge him to caution Jackson against the perfidious caresses with which he will be overwhelmed at Washington." On the 11th of December, Colonel Burr wrote to Governor Alston, saying, that, since the date of his last, "things are wonderfully advanced. These will require a letter from yourself and others, advising Jackson what is doing—that communications have been had with the northern states, requiring him only to be passive, and asking from him a list of persons to whom you may address your letters." To this letter Governor Alston replied, on the 16th February, 1816, informing Colonel Burr, that his letter was received in January, "too late, of course, had circumstances been ever so favorable, to be acted upon in the manner proposed. I fully coincide with you in sentiment; but the spirit, the energy, the health, necessary to give practical effect to sentiment, are all gone. I feel too much alone, too entirely unconnected with the world, to take much interest in anything."*

It appears, from this correspondence, that accidental circumstances alone, prevented the public nomination of General Jackson by his native state, as a candidate for president, at a very early period after the war with Great Britain, and caused the bringing forward of his name to be deferred until the last term of Mr. Monroe's administration, viz., in 1822. In the spring of 1816, General Jackson again visited New Orleans. After stationing the army in the southern section of his division, he concluded a treaty with the Indians, the object of which was to obtain from them the relinquishment of all the claim they pretended to have to lands within the limits of the United States, and which had been previously ceded by them.

In the year 1818, the services of General Jackson, in his military capacity, were again called into requisition. The Seminole Indians, of Florida, had shown their hostility to the United States, by committing depredations on the southern frontiers. General Gaines had been ordered by the president, in October, 1817, to take the necessary measures for the defence of the inhabitants of that section of the Union. He accordingly built three forts, and proceeded to expel the Indians, who resisted him, as far as was in their power, and committed various outrages. At the mouth of Flint river, the Indians fell in with a party of forty men, under Lieutenant Scott, all of whom they killed but six, who escaped by swimming.

When the news of this massacre reached General Jackson, he raised an army of two thousand five hundred volunteers, and mustered them as in the service of the United States. After a rapid march, he arrived with his army, on the 1st of April, at the Mickasucky villages, which were deserted on his approach. Having burnt the villages, he marched to St. Marks, then a Spanish post on the Appalachee bay, in Florida.

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* Davis's Life of Burr.

Two persons, who were traders with the Indians, namely, Arbuthnot, a Scotchman, and Ambrister, a British lieutenant of marines, were taken prisoners by Jackson, near St. Marks, and confined. They were both accused of exciting the Indians to hostility against the United States, and supplying them with arms and ammunition. They were tried by a court-martial, consisting of officers of the militia, and found guilty. One of them was sentenced to be shot, and the other to be hung, and their execution took place by order of General Jackson.

About the middle of May, General Jackson arrived at the Escambia, near Pensacola, having been informed that a body of hostile Indians had been harbored at that place. He took possession of Pensacola and Fort Barancas, notwithstanding a remonstrance from the governor of the territory. Two Indian chiefs, who were captured, were hung, by order of General Jackson, under circumstances which he deemed justifiable, but for which he was censured by many.

On the 2d June, 1818, General Jackson addressed a letter to the secretary of war, at the close of which he says : " The Seminole war may now be considered as at a close ; tranquillity is again restored to the southern frontier of the United States, and, as long as a cordon of military posts is maintained along the gulf of Mexico, America has nothing to apprehend from either foreign or Indian hostilities. The immutable principles of self-defence justified the occupancy of the Floridas, and the same principles will warrant the American government in holding it, until such time as Spain can guaranty, by an adequate military force, the maintaining of her authority within the colony."

After the campaign in Florida, General Jackson returned to Nashville, and shortly afterward he resigned his commission in the army. During the session of Congress, in January, 1819, he visited Washington, when his transactions in the Seminole war became the subject of investigation by Congress. After a long and exciting debate on the subject, resolutions of censure, for his proceedings in Florida, were rejected in the house of representatives, by a large majority, and his course was sustained by the president and a majority of the cabinet, although the Spanish posts in Florida were restored.

When the congressional investigation had terminated favorably to General Jackson, he visited the cities of Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. and various other parts of the United States, being received with enthusiasm by his friends in all quarters, and with distinguished attention by the public authorities and others.

In June, 1821, the president appointed him governor of Florida, which office he accepted, and in August he took possession of the territory, according to the treaty of cession. The Spanish governor, Callava, having refused to give up certain public documents, deemed of importance, he was taken into custody, by order of Governor Jackson, and committed to prison. The papers being found, under a search-warrant issued by Jackson, Callava was immediately set at liberty. Jackson remained but a few months in Florida; for, disliking the situation, and disapproving of the extent of powers vested in him as governor, he resigned the office and again retired to Tennessee. President Monroe offered him the appointment of minister to Mexico, which he declined in 1823.

In July,.1822, General Jackson was nominated by the legislature of Tennessee as a candidate for president of the United States. This nomination was repeated by assemblages of the people in several other states. In the autumn of 1823, he was elected by the legislature a senator from Tennessee, and took his seat in the senate of the United States in December, 1823. He voted for the protective tariff of 1824.

The popularity of General Jackson with the people of the United States, was shown at the presidential election of 1824, when he received a greater number of electoral votes than either of his competitors, namely, ninety-nine. Mr. Adams received eighty-four, Mr. Crawford forty-one, and Mr. Clay thirty-seven. The election consequently devolved on the house of representatives, where, by the constitutional provision, the decision is made by states. Mr. Adams was elected by that body, receiving the votes of thirteen states; General Jackson seven states; and Mr. Crawford four states. The result caused much dissatisfaction among the friends of General Jackson, but a large proportion of those who had supported Mr. Crawford, as well as most of those who had supported Mr. Clay, preferred Mr. Adams to General Jackson.

During General La Fayette's visit to the United States in 1824–'5, he passed through Tennessee, and was received by General Jackson, at the Hermitage, with his accustomed hospitality.

After the election of Mr. Adams to the presidency, the opposition to his administration was soon concentrated upon General Jackson as a candidate to succeed him. In October, 1825, he was again nominated by the legislature of Tennessee for president, on which occasion he resigned his seat in the senate of the United States, in a speech delivered to the legislature, giving his views on public affairs. During the exciting canvass which resulted in his election to the presidency in 1828, by a majority of more than two to one, of the electoral votes, over Mr. Adams, he remained in private life.

In January, 1828, he was present, by invitation, at New Orleans, at the celebration of the anniversary of his victory. Before departing for Washington, in 1829, to take the reins of government, he met with a severe affliction in the death of Mrs. Jackson. This loss bore heavily upon him for some time, and he came into power with gloomy feelings. He reached the national capital early in February, in a plain carriage.

The events of his administration we have given in another place, and to those pages the reader is referred for the history of eight years of his life. In 1832 he was re-elected to the presidency; and at the close of his second term, in March, 1837, having published a farewell address to the people of the United States, he retired to his favorite residence, at the Hermitage, in Tennessee, where he passed the remnant of his days, generally a quiet, but not disinterested spectator of public events. He was a member of the presbyterian church, and religious faith and confidence appear to have soothed and cheered all the latter period of his life. For the last year or two of his life he was infirm of body, but retained his mental faculties undiminished up to the hour of his decease, which took place on the 8th of June, 1845. His countrymen throughout the United States joined in testimonials of respect to his memory. He left no blood relatives, and his estate was bequeathed to members of the Donelson family, who were the relations of Mrs. Jackson.

The violence of political strife will long confuse men's judgment of the character and abilities of General Jackson ; but all will accord to him the praise of great firmness, energy, decision, and disinterestedness ; of remarkable military skill, and ardent patriotism. With regard to his qualifications and services as a statesman, his countrymen have been and are divided in opinion. It is, perhaps, not yet time to speak decisively on this point, but it must be left for the impartial verdict of posterity.

The personal appearance and private character of General Jackson are thus described by his friend and biographer, Mr. Eaton, previous to his election to the presidency: " In the person of General Jackson is perceived nothing of the robust and elegant. He is six feet and an inch high, remarkably straight and spare, and weighs not more than one hundred and forty-five pounds. His conformation appears to disqualify him for hardship ; yet, accustomed to it from early life, few are capable of enduring fatigue to the same extent, or with less injury. His dark blue eyes, with brows arched and slightly projecting, possess a marked expression ; but when from any cause excited, they sparkle with peculiar lustre and penetration. In his manners he is pleasing—in his address commanding ; while his countenance, marked with firmness and decision, beams with a strength and intelligence that strikes at first sight. In his deportment there is nothing repulsive. Easy, affable, and familiar, he is open and accessible to all. Influenced by the belief that merit should constitute the only difference in men, his attention is equally bestowed on honest poverty as on titled consequence. His moral character is without reproach; and by those who know him most intimately he is most esteemed. Benevolence in him is a prominent virtue. He was never known to pass distress without seeking to assist and to relieve it."

ADMINISTRATON OF JACKSON.

On the fourth of March, 1829, General Andrew Jackson entered on his duties as president of the United States. At twelve o'clock of that day, the senate, which had been convened by his predecessor, Mr. Adams, adjourned, after a session of one hour, during which the president elect entered the senate-chamber, attended by the marshal of the district and the committee of arrangements. He had been escorted to the capitol, from Gadsby's hotel, by a few of the surviving officers and soldiers of the revolution, and made the following reply to an address delivered to him at the hotel:—

" Respected Friends: Your affectionate address awakens sentiments and recollections which I feel with sincerity, and cherish with pride. To have around my person, at the moment of undertaking the most solemn of all duties to my country, the companions of the immortal Washington, will afford me satisfaction and grateful encouragement. That by my best exertions I shall be able to exhibit more than an imitation of his labors, a sense of my own imperfections, and the reverence I entertain for his virtues, forbid me to hope.

" To you, respected friends, the survivors of that heroic band who followed him so long and so valiantly in the path of glory, I offer my sincere thanks, and to Heaven my prayers, that your remaining years may be as happy as your toils and your lives have been illustrious."

The chief-justice of the United States, and associate judges of the supreme court, entered the senate-chamber soon after the president, and occupied the seats assigned for them, on the right of the president's chair. The foreign ministers and their suites, in their splendid official costumes, occupied seats on the left of the president's chair. A large number of ladies were present. The western gallery was reserved for members of the house of representatives.

After the adjournment of the senate, about noon, a procession was formed to the eastern portico of the capitol, where, in the presence of an immense concourse of spectators, the president delivered his inaugural address; and having concluded it, the oath to support the constitution was administered to him by Chief-Justice Marshall.

Salutes were fired by two companies of artillery, stationed in the vicinity of the capitol, which were repeated at the forts, and by detachments of artillery on the plains. When the president retired, the procession was re-formed, and he was conducted to the presidential mansion. He here received the salutations of a vast number of persons, who came to congratulate him upon his induction to the presidency. The day was serene and mild, and every way favorable to the wishes of those who had come from a distance to witness the ceremony of the inauguration.

General Jackson did not call upon President Adams, and the ex-president was not present at the installation of President Jackson.*

The members of Mr. Adams's cabinet having resigned, President Jackson, immediately after his inauguration, nominated to the senate the following gentlemen for heads of the respective departments, who were promptly confirmed, viz.: Martin Van Buren, of New York, secretary of state; Samuel D. Ingham, of Pennsylvania, secretary of the treasury; John H. Eaton, of Tennessee, secretary of war; John Branch, of North Carolina, secretary of the navy; John M'Pherson Berrien, of Georgia, attorney-general. It was determined to introduce the postmaster-general into the cabinet; the incumbent of that office, John M'Lean, was appointed associate justice of the supreme court, and William T. Barry, of Kentucky, received the appointment of postmaster-general. Certain duties in the department of state requiring immediate attention on the accession of a new president, James A. Hamilton, of New York, son of the late General Alexander Hamilton, was charged temporarily with the duties of secretary of state; until Mr. Van Buren could close his business as governor of New York, on the duties of which office he had only entered on the 1st of January, 1829.

The secretaries of state and the navy, and the attorney-general, had been leading supporters of Mr. Crawford, in the presidential contest of 1824. Mr. Ingham was selected through the influence of the vice-president, Mr. Calhoun, and Messrs. Eaton and Barry were among the original supporters of General Jackson.

The cabinet was now constituted, and, after confirming the nomination of some active partisans to diplomatic posts and to lucrative stations in the land office, customhouse, and navy, the senate adjourned on the 17th of March, the executive having informed that body that he had no further business to lay before it. The promised work of reform now commenced in good earnest. Before the inauguration, the capital had been thronged with political partisans, chiefly from the eastern, middle, and western states, all clamorous for some reward for their electioneering services during the canvass. It had been distinctly avowed by the most prominent organs of the successful party, that the president would be urged to reward his friends and punish his enemies; it was expected, therefore, that he would make a prompt and general removal of his opponents from office, and, by the appointment of his friends, secure the ascendency of his party. This expectation was not destined to disappointment. Scarcely had the senate adjourned, when a general system of removal from office was entered upon, with the view of rewarding those who had been instrumental in promoting the president's election.

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* Niles's Register.

Never before had so total a change been made in the public offices. Formerly it had been confined to those prominent places which constitute the stakes for which the game of politics is so often played. The revolution extended further now, and men too humble to be claimed by any party were removed from situations upon which they depended for a livelihood, to make room for active partisans. Availing himself of the right of the executive to fill vacancies occurring in the recess, the president, shortly after the adjournment of the senate, removed the principal officers of the treasury, the marshals and district attorneys in most of the eastern, middle, and western states, the revenue-officers of the chief Atlantic ports, the greater part of the receivers and registers in the land-office ; and effected an equally radical change in the diplomatic corps.

The number of appointments made by the president during the recess was one hundred and seventy-six, principally in consequence of removals of political opponents from office. During General Washington's administration there were *nine* removals ; of these one was a defaulter. In John Adams's administration of four years there were *ten* removals ; one of these was a defaulter. In Jefferson's, of eight years, there were *thirty-nine.* In James Madison's, of eight years, there were *five* removals, of which three were defaulters. In James Monroe's, of eight years, there were *nine* removals, of which six were for cause. In John Quincy Adams's, of four years, there were *two* removals ; both for cause. Total removals by six presidents, seventy-four.

As these removals by President Jackson were invariably made to make room for political adherents, and as with some exceptions no act of official delinquency was proved against the former incumbents, the conduct of the executive was subjected to severe animadversions. He was charged with usurping an authority not conferred by the constitution, which it was contended only gave him the right to fill vacancies, either occasionally occurring, or caused by some official misconduct ; and even if acting within the limits of his constitutional prerogative, it was a proscription for opinion's sake, contrary to the spirit of our institutions, and without a precedent in the history of the country. On the other hand, it was contended that the executive was solely invested with the right of removal ; that it was a discretionary right, for the exercise of which he was responsible solely to the nation ; that that power was given to enable him not only to remove incumbents, for delinquency or incapacity, but with the view of reforming the administration of the government, and introducing officers of greater efficiency or sounder principles into its various departments. Occasion was also taken, owing to the defalcation of a few of those removed, to assert the necessity of reform, and unsparing efforts were made to create an impression on the public mind of the necessity of a general removal of the officers of the federal government.

Some abuses no doubt existed, and one instance of fraud and defalcation on the part of an auditor high in the confidence of the late administration, gave a temporary popularity to this policy; but when it was discovered, after a vigorous scrutiny, that defalcations to the amount of a few thousand dollars only were detected, and that in no instance were these fastened upon officers appointed by Mr. Adams, a reaction took place in the public feeling.

The manner of distributing the executive patronage was also strongly contrasted with the professions of General Jackson shortly before the election. He had then earnestly inculcated the propriety of a chief magistrate acting for the good of the whole and not a part of the community, and devoting himself to exterminate party spirit; and among the most reprehensible modes of bestowing appointments, he had designated that of conferring offices on members of Congress. He regarded this as aiming so directly at the independence and purity of the legislature, that he proposed an amendment of the constitution, prohibiting the appointment of members of Congress to any office, except judicial, during the term for which they were elected and two years thereafter. It was therefore cause of general surprise to find him within the first year of his administration conferring a greater number of offices upon members of Congress than any of his predecessors had done, during their whole term of service.*

A general change took place in the postoffice department. Under the superintendence of Mr. M'Lean, this department had been distinguished for its efficiency and order, and as its functions operated directly upon the private business of individuals, that officer had acquired great and deserved popularity from the manner in which its duties were discharged. He had himself been favorable to the election of General Jackson, and his continuance in an office of so much influence and patronage had been deemed an instance of magnanimity on the part of Mr. Adams, and a proof of his determination not to use the patronage of the government for party purposes.

The transfer of that officer to the bench of the supreme court, and the introduction of his successor, Mr. Barry, into the cabinet, were regarded as indications of an intention to introduce the proscriptive system into the postoffice, and the numerous removals which took place shortly after his appointment verified the apprehensions of the community. By the report of the postmaster-general, in answer to a resolution of the senate, it ap-

* American Annual Register.

peared that he had removed between the 4th of March, 1829, and the 22d of March, 1830, four hundred and ninety-one postmasters.*

At the commencement of General Jackson's administration there was a disposition generally evinced among his opponents to give his measures a fair trial. Some uncertainty existed as to the policy which the new president might feel bound to adopt. The inferences which the public had drawn as to his principles from his votes when in the senate of the United States, had been rendered somewhat uncertain by the contradictory assertions made by his supporters in different sections of the Union, and by the decided political character of that portion of his adherents who had been ranked in the previous contest, of 1824, among the friends of the late secretary of the treasury, Mr. Crawford. That class of public men was regarded as contending for a strict construction of the federal constitution, and their support was given to Mr. Crawford upon principles of opposition to the policy that governed the administration of Mr. Monroe. All the other candidates in that contest were sustained upon a contrary principle. The construction given to the federal constitution by which Congress was deemed to be empowered to protect domestic manufactures, to appropriate moneys for works of internal improvement, to create a United States bank, and generally to regulate and control all affairs strictly national, had become the settled policy of the country. Strong objections were still urged to this construction by the representatives from the southern states, and by some of the leading friends of Mr. Crawford in other sections of the Union. But it had been too long and too generally acquiesced in, to permit the hope of a successful appeal to public opinion in behalf of candidates offered upon principles of opposition to that construction. All the candidates for president in 1824 consequently were understood to be in favor of that construction.

General Jackson had not occupied so conspicuous a station in political life as either of the other candidates; but while in the United States senate, he had been no less decided in his opinions on the long-disputed question as to the constructive powers of Congress. During his short term of service in that body, he had voted in the affirmative on eight different bills providing for internal improvement by the general government; and his vote in favor of the tariff of 1824—a tariff which was founded on the principle of protection—afforded sufficient evidence that his opinions accorded rather with those of Mr. Adams, Mr. Clay, and Mr. Calhoun, than with those of the supporters of Mr. Crawford.†

It may be remarked that Mr. Crawford himself, when a member of the United States senate in 1810, advocated the recharter of the first bank of the United States; and, while subsequently a member of the cabinet, was understood to be in favor of internal improvements by the general government, and a protective tariff. Mr. Calhoun had supported in Congress the protective features of the tariff, and the incorporation of a national bank, in 1816; and had efficiently contributed, when in Congress, and also while in the cabinet, to the adoption of a national system of internal improvements.

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* American Annual Register.

† Ibid.

The determination of the respective friends of Jackson, Crawford, and Calhoun, to combine in support of the general at the election of 1828, induced much speculation as to the political course which would be pursued by his administration in the event of success; and it was predicted that a party so constituted could not continue united after the government should fall into its hands, without a complete sacrifice of principle by one of the sections of the combination.

The president would, of course, be compelled to adopt the literal construction of the constitution, as held in Virginia and other southern states, or to pursue the policy marked out by his predecessors. During the pendency of the election, the public might be left in doubt. Such as were inclined to promote his elevation in the north and west, could justify their preference by appealing to his votes, when in the senate, in favor of the tariff and internal improvement, while his supporters in the south could be equally zealous, either relying upon a more intimate acquaintance with his opinions, or upon those measures which his character as a candidate sustained upon the principle of reform, should compel him to adopt in case of success. But after his inauguration, he must decide between these conflicting pretensions, and this would compel those to whom that decision should prove unpalatable, to decide in their turn between the abandonment of their political party or their principles. This very position, properly viewed, was but another of the fortunate circumstances in which the successful competitor for the chief magistracy found himself placed at the time of his elevation. Chosen by an overwhelming majority of the electoral votes, he owed his success to his own popularity. Generally sanctioning the policy under which our national institutions had been built up, he was at liberty to review his opinions, and to establish them upon incontrovertible and immutable grounds. His administration was not bound to persist in any particular measures which experience had proved to be inexpedient; but claiming, as it did, to be constituted upon the basis of reform, it was able to modify the existing policy, and to carry out its principles under all the advantages offered by the light of experience and the development of public opinion. Equally uncommitted was he respecting the parties which had formerly distracted the country. His advice to Mr. Monroe, in 1816, to discard all party feelings, and to remember that, as chief magistrate, he acted for the whole and not a part of the community—sentiments which did equal honor to his head and his heart, and which he reiterated as his settled opinion in 1824—left him free to call to his councils the ablest and most virtuous men of the nation, without regard to the party denominations by which they had been previously distinguished.

Under these fortunate circumstances, General Jackson had assumed the executive government, with a surplus of more than five millions of dollars in the national treasury, the country respected abroad, at peace with all the world, and in a state of unexampled and progressive domestic prosperity.*

Such was the state of affairs when the twenty-first Congress assembled on the 7th of December, 1829 ; and this first session continued until the 31st of May, 1830. The majority in each branch in favor of the new administration was decided. The vice-president being absent at the commencement of the session, Samuel Smith, of Maryland, resumed the chair, as president *pro tempore* of the senate. In the house of representatives, Andrew Stevenson was re-elected speaker by 152 votes against 39.

The message of the president in point of expression was considered equal to those of his predecessors, and gave an elaborate view of the foreign relations and domestic concerns of the United States. Many of its recommendations were considered at this session of Congress, but in several instances the president's views met with an unfavorable reception from his friends in both houses. On the subject of a renewal of the charter of the bank of the United States, the standing committees of the senate and the house, to whom it was referred, made reports diametrically opposite to the recommendation of the president. The friends of the administration formed a majority in both committees, and the marked difference in the opinions entertained by them from that expressed in the president's message, afforded a striking proof of the want of harmony between the president and cabinet, and the party which had brought them into power. Committees on retrenchment and reform made reports on those subjects, but found little favor in either house, and nothing effectual was done on the subject. The amendments to the constitution recommended by the president were deemed equally unimportant, and were treated with like neglect. On the subject of a revision of the tariff, the recommendation of the president met with more favor. Although somewhat ambiguously expressed, the views of the president, as set forth in his message, were understood as hostile to the protective policy. With a view of effecting a modification of the revenue system, several bills were introduced to repeal or diminish the duties on various articles of general consumption.

The tariff of 1828 became a law during the excitement of the presidential election, and in adjusting its details, more regard had been paid to the political effect of the law, than to the permanent interests of the country, or to the rules of political economy. Hostility to the tariff had been manifested early in the session of 1829–'30, by many of the friends of the administration ; but an equally strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing law, on the ground of its inadequate protection to the woollen manufactures, had induced the friends of the policy to bring forward the subject, with the view of obtaining a modification of the law more favorable to their interests, and to prevent the frauds which were alleged to be daily practised on the revenue.

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* American Annual Register.

A bill was accordingly reported in the house of representatives, by Mr. Mallary, chairman of the committee on manufactures, on the 27th of January, 1830, to regulate the entry of importations of woollens. After much debate in both houses, it was passed, and being sanctioned by the president, became a law in May following.

Several unsuccessful attempts were made to engraft upon the above-mentioned bill amendments reducing the duties on various articles. It was finally concluded to attack the tariff in detail, and separate bills were introduced, providing for a reduction of duties on salt and molasses; both of which were passed, by considerable majorities. Another bill was passed, reducing the duties on tea and coffee.

The following laws, in addition to the foregoing, were the most important which were passed during this session: For the reappropriation of thirty thousand dollars for the suppression of the slave-trade, which had been appropriated two years before, but was not expended, and which was founded on an act of Congress of 1819; for repealing an act imposing tonnage duties on vessels of which the officers and two thirds of the seamen were citizens of the United States; for the more effectual collection of impost duties, appointing eight additional appraisers to examine goods imported, but no new regulations to prevent defaults in the officers of the customs; for the appointment of an additional officer to be attached to the treasury department, called the solicitor of the treasury; for allowing a drawback on spirits exported, distilled from molasses, which the existing laws did not permit; for allowing a portion of the claims of Massachusetts, for services and expenses of the militia in 1812–'14, in time of war, and for which that state had not been reimbursed, the amount allowed being four hundred and thirty thousand dollars, about half the sum claimed; for the removal of the Indians from lands occupied by them within any state of the Union, to a territory west of the Mississippi, and without the limits of any state or organized territory, and belonging to the United States, by purchase or relinquishment of the Indians, by treaty; to divide such territory into districts, for the reception and permanent settlement of those who should consent to emigrate from their residence on the east of that river, they relinquishing all claims to lands they then occupied; the tribes to have the solemn assurance of government that it will *for ever* secure and guaranty to them and their posterity, the tract of country so exchanged with them for the lands they should quit in Georgia, Alabama, and any other states; and should they abandon the territory at a future time, the same to revert to the United States; the Indians to have the amount of their improvements made on the lands they may leave; to be aided in their removal, and supported for one year by the federal government; to be protected against assaults from other tribes in the vicinity of their new residence; and five hundred thousand dollars were granted for carrying the act into effect.*

A highly-interesting debate took place in the senate during this session, on a resolution offered on the 29th of December, 1829, by Mr. Foot, of Connecticut, on the subject of the public lands. The resolution proposed an inquiry into the expediency of limiting, for a certain period, the sales of the public lands to such lands only as had been offered for sale, and were subject to entry at the minimum price, and to abolish the office of surveyor-general. The subject was of great interest to all the members of the senate, and gave rise to an extended debate, in which Mr. Hayne, of South Carolina, Mr. Webster, of Massachusetts, and Mr. Benton, of Missouri, were most conspicuous.

The discussion took a wide range, and the speakers wandered from the subject of the public lands to discuss almost every topic of general interest connected with the politics of the day. The senator from South Carolina took this occasion, not only to reproach the eastern states with a design to prevent the settlement of the west, from sectional or political views, but to plead for the doctrine of state-rights and power to an extent considered by some as novel and alarming.

Mr. Hayne contended that his views of the principles of the constitution were sustained by the resolutions of the Virginia legislature, adopted in 1798, and which were drawn up by Mr. Madison, who was one of the principal framers of the constitution. Mr. Webster replied to Mr. Hayne, in one of the most powerful and effective speeches ever delivered in Congress. His argument on the powers of the federal government granted by the constitution, as being paramount in certain cases to the authority of the states, was admitted by a large portion of the people of the United States to be sound and entirely unanswerable. He contended, that on subjects fully committed to the general government by the constitution, its powers were exclusive and unlimited; that no one state, nor even a number of states, might justly interfere with its measures; and that the public lands, not particularly and expressly ceded to a state, were solely at the disposal and under the jurisdiction of the United States government. He said he was not averse to the policy of retaining a large part of the lands for a future revenue, and yet was in favor of selling small tracts to actual settlers, and thus gradually to fill up the vacant territory with inhabitants.

The effect of this speech throughout the Union was destructive to the hopes of the advocates of nullification. They had been gradually gaining strength, owing in a great measure to the inattention of the public to the pernicious consequences of their doctrines. In Georgia they formed a majority, had carried their principles into practical effect, and their doctrines had received the implied sanction of the president in reference to the Indian question. In South Carolina and Virginia they constituted a majority of the legislatures ; and in New York an obvious leaning toward the same principles was manifested by the dominant party under a professed attachment to state-rights.

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* Bradford.

Public opinion, however, was now fully awakened. The language of the senator from Massachusetts met with a ready response from a large proportion of the American people, who felt the Union to be in danger from the doctrine of nullification, and both parties evinced their attachment to the constitution by the warmest approbation of the sentiments advanced by Mr. Webster.*

Although the unequivocal testimonies of popular feeling checked the tendency on the part of many leading politicians to nullification, and the doctrines of Mr. Webster's speech were in substance sustained subsequently by President Jackson in his proclamation respecting the difficulties in South Carolina, in 1832 ; yet the views of Mr. Hayne respecting state-rights and the powers of the general government continued to be entertained and asserted by a large and respectable portion of the people of the southern states.

Besides those of Mr. Hayne and Mr. Webster, many of the other speeches in the senate during the great debate referred to, were distinguished for eloquence, ingenuity, and power. No particular law resulted from this protracted and able discussion.

A warm opposition was instituted in the senate to the whole course of the executive in relation to removals from office : first, on the ground of their unconstitutionality ; and, second, on that of inexpediency. The opposition failed on both points ; and on the first it can hardly be doubted that it was unsound in principle. The expediency of the reform itself was a subject of greater difference of opinion. The consequence was, that the senate rejected many of the appointments made during the recess, and in some instances the vote rejecting them was so large as to convey a strong censure upon the selections of the president.

There were early indications of a want of harmony among the different sections of which the administration party was composed. Efforts had been made from the commencement of the presidential term of General Jackson, by the respective partisans of the vice-president and of the secretary of state, to direct the executive patronage to the aggrandizement of their own friends. A division of the party was early seen to be inevitable, but the personal predilections of the president were as yet unknown. In the formation of the cabinet, the first post had been given to Mr. Van Buren himself, but the extensive influence of the treasury department was placed under the control of Mr. Ingham, a devoted friend of the vice-president. The other members of the cabinet were not selected with reference to the views of either of the competitors for the succession to the presidency, but upon grounds of personal preference on the part of the president. The views of the secretary of state and of the secretary of the navy had not harmonized with those of the secretaries of war and of the treasury. The attorney general had belonged to the old federal party, and the postmaster-general had not shown that his political principles necessarily inclined him to a narrow construction of the powers of the federal government. Upon the whole, however, the cabinet was formed with an apparent preference of the political creed professed by the friends of the vice-president, rather than that of the radical party. The star of the vice-president was deemed to be in the ascendant, and it was generally believed that the influence of the executive would be exerted to promote his elevation to the presidential chair upon his own retirement. These opinions, however, were not realized.

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* American Annual Register.

While the patronage of the executive was so directed publicly to strengthen Mr. Calhoun's political party, by placing many of his friends in important posts, the ground on which he stood was crumbling beneath him, and measures were in train to create a breach between him and the president. To him, as a more early and efficient supporter, the president had given a greater share of confidence, and manifested a warmer feeling, than he had originally bestowed upon the secretary of state. In this particular the secretary labored under a disadvantage ; but circumstances soon enabled him to obtain a great superiority of influence over the mind of the president.

The secretary of war had been brought into the cabinet on account of the confidential relations and intimate friendship subsisting between him and the president, and of course was entitled to and received his entire confidence. Upon the arrival of the secretary of state at Washington, he found a coolness existing between the secretary of war and the vice-president, and a division in the cabinet itself, in consequence of some disagreement in their private relations. As the president warmly sympathized in the feelings and resentment of the secretary of war on this point, the secretaries of the treasury and navy, as the objects of that resentment, gradually lost his confidence, which was transferred to the secretary of state, whose course both in public and private had so completely harmonized with the wishes of himself and his friends.*

The loss of influence on the part of the secretary of the treasury had impaired the indirect power of Mr. Calhoun, and the same cause had injured his own standing with the executive. No open breach had, however, as yet taken place between them, and the vice-president and his friends in Congress continued to support the administration, some of whose appointments were carried by the casting vote of the vice-president, as president of the senate.

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* American Annual Register.

Affairs remained on this uncertain footing until nearly the close of the first session of the twenty-first Congress. At that time, and after the greater part of the questionable nominations had been confirmed, a movement was made which ripened the misunderstanding between the president and the vice-president into a complete alienation of feeling, and prepared the way for an open rupture. Before this event occurred, the influence of the controversy above alluded to had effected a change in the political relations of some of the members of the cabinet; and upon that question the president, the secretaries of state and of war, and the postmaster-general, were opposed to the secretaries of the treasury and navy, and the attorney general; and the division was understood to have no inconsiderable bearing upon other questions of greater importance.

This misunderstanding continued to increase, until finally an open rupture was produced. This quarrel, however, professedly originated in the view taken by Mr. Calhoun of the conduct of General Jackson during the Seminole campaign, in 1818.

General Jackson had commanded the American troops in that war, and acting, as he conceived, in the execution of his orders, had invaded the territory of Florida, then belonging to Spain, and occupied the forts and town of Pensacola, to which the Indians had fled for protection. The Spanish minister at Washington remonstrated, and in the discussions which took place in Mr. Monroe's cabinet respecting this transaction, Mr. Calhoun, as secretary of war, proposed that a court of inquiry should be held on General Jackson's conduct, inasmuch as he had transcended his orders.

Mr. Crawford, then secretary of the treasury, also advocated a course which would have been deemed a censure on General Jackson; but the secretary of state (Mr. Adams), conceding that the orders from the war department had been transcended, so forcibly vindicated the course of General Jackson, upon principles of national law, that all proceedings against him were relinquished, and the government determined, in its discussions with Spain, to justify the invasion, while it delivered up the posts. This was done by an able reply from the secretary of state to the complaints of the Spanish minister, in which the course of the American general was successfully vindicated.

The subject was afterward agitated in Congress, and the friends of Mr. Crawford in that body were particularly distinguished for their efforts to censure the conduct of General Jackson. As might have been expected, the general felt greatly aggrieved by this attack, and his resentment was roused both against Mr. Crawford and Mr. Clay, whose opinions on this subject were openly avowed, in the debate on the Seminole war. Toward Mr. Adams, by whom he had been so ably defended, and toward Mr. Calhoun, who had publicly sustained him, notwithstanding his first impressions, he had, until lately, expressed the warmest feelings of gratitude.

This harmonious footing (with regard to the latter), which was first disturbed by the controversy above mentioned, was now destined to be totally destroyed.

Toward the close of the first session of the twenty-first Congress, a letter from Mr. Crawford to Mr. Forsyth was placed in the hands of General Jackson, by the agency of a particular friend of the secretary of state, then at Washington, accusing Mr. Calhoun of having proposed a censure upon him for his conduct in the Seminole campaign. This letter was transmitted to Mr. Calhoun by the president, with an intimation, that it was so contrary to his impressions of the course he had supposed Mr. Calhoun to have pursued, as to require some explanation. Mr. Calhoun replied, and showed, by referring to the correspondence between General Jackson and the government, in 1818, that he must have known Mr. Calhoun's opinion to be that he had transcended his orders, and that his vindication had then been placed on other and distinct grounds. Mr. Calhoun then proceeded to inquire into the motives which had led, at this late period, to a renewal of this discussion, and avowed his belief that it had originated in a desire to detract from his influence with the president, and thus to destroy his political standing with the friends of the administration. A long and protracted correspondence ensued, in which the late secretary of the treasury, Mr. Crawford, and several of his confidential friends took part, and although the secretary of state distinctly disclaimed all knowledge of the preliminary movements, and all motive to detract from the political standing of the vice-president, still, their respective claims upon the succession, his course in public and private, after being appointed secretary of state, and the political relations of the agents who appeared as the prime movers in this affair, produced a general impression that its sole object was to create a breach between the president and vice-president, with the view of destroying the influence of a formidable competitor for public favor.*

Having alluded to the subject of nullification, as evinced by the acts of a portion of the people of the southern states, at this period, it is proper that we should notice in this place the origin and progress of that political doctrine, as connected with controversies and events which occurred during this administration. It may be remarked, as a general proposition, that the southern states have, with the exception of South Carolina, been uniformly hostile to the exercise of power by the general government. That state, although voting with the adjacent states on all local and on most national questions, had on some occasions, as in 1790, '91, and in 1816, been foremost in asserting the right of Congress to legislate on certain disputed points. Among those were the subjects of internal improvement, the United States bank, and the tariff. A change of opinion had now taken place there, and it began to go beyond any of the advocates of state-rights, in its assertion of state sovereignty. A vehement opposition to a protective tariff, both in 1824 and on the subsequent modification in 1828, had been led by the talented delegation in Congress, and when they were defeated in the halls of legislation, with characteristic energy they renewed their efforts to overturn the system, and to render it unpopular with the people.

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* American Annual Register.

At first it was contemplated, on its passage, to resign their seats in Congress, and a meeting of the delegation was held at Washington, with the view of deciding upon the steps which should be taken. This proposition was discussed, together with that of declaring the law to be void and of no effect within the state, and the chances of a successful resistance to the federal government were freely canvassed.

The delegation, however, did not concur in adopting violent measures, and it was determined to endeavor, upon their return home, to rouse their constituents to a more effectual opposition to the protective system. No exertions were spared to excite public feeling against the law. It was denounced as a measure local in its character, partial and oppressive in its operation, and unconstitutional in principle.

Having convinced themselves of this, they began to question the right of the federal government to require obedience, and almost simultaneously with the legislature of Georgia, which, December 24, 1827, resolved to submit only to its own construction of the federal compact, the senate of South Carolina instituted a committee to inquire into the powers of the federal government, in reference to certain subjects then agitated.

The report of this committee, which received the sanction of both branches of the legislature, in December, 1827, asserted that the federal constitution was a compact originally formed, not between the people of the United States at large, but between the people of the different states, as distinct and independent sovereignties; and that when any violation of the letter or spirit of that compact took place, it is not only the right of the people, but of the state legislatures, to remonstrate against it; that the federal government was responsible to the people whenever it abused or injudiciously exercised powers intrusted to it, and that it was responsible to the state legislatures whenever it assumed powers not conferred. Admitting that, under the constitution, a tribunal was appointed to decide controversies, where the United States was a party, the report contended that some questions must occur between the United States and the states, which it would be unsafe to submit to any judicial tribunal. The supreme court had already manifested an undue leaning in favor of the federal government; and when the constitution was violated in its spirit, and not literally, there was peculiar propriety in a state legislature's undertaking to decide for itself, inasmuch as the constitution had not provided any remedy.

The report then proceeded to declare all legislation for the protection of domestic manufactures to be unconstitutional, as being in favor of a local interest, and that Congress had no power to legislate, except upon subjects of general interest. The power to construct roads and canals within the limits of a state, or to appropriate money for that purpose, was also denounced as unconstitutional, as was all legislation for the purpose of meliorating the condition of the free colored or the slave population of the United States.

On this last topic, it was intimated that no reasoning could take place between the United States and South Carolina. It was a question of feeling too intimately connected with their tranquillity and safety to be discussed.

In remonstrating against these violations of the constitution, the state should appear as a sovereign, and not as a suppliant, before the national legislature; and resolutions, expressive of the approbation of the state legislature of these principles, having passed both houses, they were transmitted, with the report, to the delegation in Congress, to be laid before that body, then engaged in the consideration of the tariff.

That law having passed, the legislature of the state, at the next session, sanctioned a protest against it as unconstitutional, oppressive, and unjust, which was transmitted to their senators, to be entered upon the journal of the senate. This was done on the 10th of February, 1829. The change which took place in the federal government caused a belief that some satisfactory modification would be made of the tariff; and during the summer of 1829 the excitement appeared to be directed less against the administration, and more concentrated against the law itself. The doctrine, however, of the right of a state to nullify an act of Congress was not relinquished, although it seemed to be conceded that it would be best to attempt first to procure the repeal of the obnoxious law. In these opinions the state government of Georgia fully concurred. As a measure of policy, the tariff was equally unpopular; and the controversy respecting the Indians had been carried to that length, as to bring the state in collision with a law of Congress, and to induce the legislature to declare that it should be disregarded and held void.

The legislature of Virginia also declared its assent to the same principle of nullification, by a vote of 134 to 68; and judging from the opinions expressed by the public functionaries of those states, the time appeared to be near at hand when the Union was about to be dissolved, by the determination of a large section not to submit to the laws of the federal government, nor to any common tribunal appointed to decide upon their constitutionality.

A check was indeed given to this spirit by the state of North Carolina, which, although not then less averse to the policy of the tariff, declared itself against all violent measures in opposition to it.

The state of Alabama also, in 1828, when remonstrating against the passage of the tariff, conceded the right of Congress to pass revenue laws, although the incidental effect might be to protect domestic manufactures. In 1829, indeed, this state went further, and assumed nearly the same ground with Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia ; still the qualified opposition first made to the law, proved that the south was not united in the unconstitutional stand taken by some of the states on that subject, and that the injustice and oppression which were so vehemently denounced, were not so plainly and generally felt as to render resistance to the tariff a popular step. Indeed, it was doubted whether the feelings of the people in the three states which had declared in favor of nullification, were not misrepresented by the local legislatures. However decidedly they might have disapproved of the policy of protection, no sufficient evidence had yet been given that they deemed it a greater evil than disunion ; and the declarations and resolutions put forth by the state governments were considered as the sudden ebullitions of violent feelings, or as efforts on the part of leading men to excite a tempest in the public mind for political effect. This movement was not rendered less dangerous by the motives of those who made it. When the storm began to rage, it would be impossible to control it. It might as easily break down the barriers of the constitution and overturn the government, as annul an unpopular law. The federative principle of the constitution, and the whole authority of Congress and of the federal judiciary, were put in issue by the question now started, and however unwilling the leaders might be to destroy the Union, still experience had too clearly shown the difficulty of restraining an excited people, not to create apprehension as to the result of these efforts to throw off the authority of the general government. Similar movements in another portion of the Union, also originating in local interests, and aiming at an extension of state sovereignty, to the detriment of the just claims of the federal government, gave additional ground for these apprehensions. Efforts had been made of late years, in some of the western states, to induce them to claim, under pretence of their rights as sovereign states, the public lands belonging to the United States within their several limits.* This subject gave rise to the important debate in the senate on Mr. Foot's resolutions, in 1830, already noticed.

The question of internal improvements by the general government was discussed during the first session of the twenty-first Congress, when it appeared that the friends of the system retained a majority in both houses. Among the bills passed at this session was one authorizing a subscription to the stock of the Maysville and Lexington road company, in Kentucky. It passed the house by a vote of 102 to 85, and the senate 24 to 18. After retaining the bill eight days, the president returned it to the house on the 27th of May, 1830, with his objections, as set forth in his message of that date.

The reading of this veto message caused much excitement in Congress.

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* American Annual Register.

Many of the friends of the president from Pennsylvania, and from the west, had relied upon his adhering to his former opinions upon this question, and this message first forced upon their minds a conviction as unwelcome as it was unexpected. The question being taken upon the passage of the bill, notwithstanding the objections of the president, after a warm debate on the reconsideration, the vote stood, yeas 96, nays 92. Two thirds of the house not agreeing to pass the bill, it was rejected, although a majority of the house thus refused to sustain the objections of the president.

On the 29th of May, the house of representatives took up several bills relating to internal improvement which originated in the senate, and, notwithstanding the presidential veto of the Maysville road bill, passed, by large majorities, three acts, viz.: 1st, authorizing a subscription to the Washington turnpike company; 2d, authorizing a subscription to the Louisville and Portland canal company; 3d, appropriating money for lighthouses, improving harbors, directing surveys, &c. The first bill, being similar to the one already rejected by the president, was returned by him to the senate, where it originated, with a reference to the message on the Maysville bill for his reasons. The senate then proceeded to reconsider the bill, and on the question of its passage, notwithstanding the objections of the president, the vote stood, yeas 21, nays 17, and the majority being less than two thirds, the bill was rejected.

The other two bills were retained by the president for further consideration, untill the next session of Congress. This determination of the executive against the system of internal improvement, gave great offence to many of his friends, and entirely alienated some from his party. Even in Congress such an increasing want of confidence was manifested, that the decided majorities which the administration possessed in both houses at the commencement of the session, had dwindled before its close into feeble and inefficient minorities. Nor was this the only difficulty in which the executive was involved by the course taken on internal improvement. He had sanctioned a bill for continuing the Cumberland road, and making other appropriations for roads and surveys; and another for the improvement of harbors and rivers, both of which were branches in the general system of internal improvement. The former bill he approved of, with a qualification, by referring to a message sent to the house, together with the bill, wherein he declared, that as a section appropriating $8,000 for the road from Detroit to Chicago, might be construed to authorize the application of the appropriation to continue the road beyond the territory of Michigan, he desired to be understood as having approved the bill, with the understanding that the road is not to be extended beyond the limits of the said territory. The novelty of this act on the part of the president, attracted much attention, as the constitution confines the action of the president on the legislation of Congress to a mere naked right of approval or disapproval.

The approval of the acts authorizing the appropriations above mentioned, left it still doubtful how far the president felt at liberty to assent to internal improvement bills, and of the exact extent and limits of the principles by which he intended to be governed during the residue of his administration. Some dissatisfaction was excited by the unusual course he adopted, of retaining bills until the next session; and the country looked forward with some curiosity for the further development of his views on this question, at the next session of Congress.*

The most important of the foreign relations of the United States left unsettled by President Adams, were those of the commercial intercourse with Great Britain, and the boundaries between the American colonies of that power and the United States; and the claims of the United States on France for indemnity on account of depredations on our commerce and navigation. Efforts had been making, for more than ten years, to obtain compensation for these losses, but the subject had not been finally and satisfactorily settled. And the restrictions imposed by the British government on the trade between the British colonies and the United States, had not been removed.

In July, 1825, the former colonial policy was somewhat changed by the British administration; and efforts were made for supplying the West India islands, which had received various articles from the United States, from their possessions on the American continent, namely, Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. Trade was opened to and with all other nations to which colonies belonged; so that the United States were excluded from the benefits which the nations of Europe might secure. There was another difficulty attending the subject. While the federal administration was considering in what way the United States could best avail itself of this measure of the British government, the latter, in July, 1826, passed an order excluding the vessels of the United States from their colonial ports. And in this state the commercial relations of the two countries remained when President Adams retired from office.†

Mr. Gallatin, envoy at the court of England, returned in 1827, and Mr. Barbour was appointed his successor by Mr. Adams, in May, 1828. In 1829, President Jackson appointed Louis M'Lane, of Delaware, envoy to Great Britain, William C. Rives, of Virginia, to France, and Cornelius P. Van Ness to Spain.

By an act of Congress of May, 1830, provision was made for reviving and opening the direct trade with the British ports in the West India islands; which had long been prevented by the measures of the British government. The terms proposed in this act of Congress were accepted by the British ministry, after having put their own construction upon them.

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* American Annual Register.

† Bradford.

The loss of the colonial trade was imputed entirely to the mismanagement of the administration of Mr. Adams, and the Jackson administration came into power under strong assurances on the part of its friends, that no effort would be spared to induce England to open the West India ports to American vessels.

Accordingly, shortly after the inauguration of General Jackson, Mr. M'Lane, of Delaware, was appointed minister to England, with special instructions on this point. The secretary of state, in these instructions, stated that there were three grounds on which the United States were assailable: "1st, in their too long and too tenaciously resisting the right of Great Britain to impose protecting duties in her colonies; 2d, in confining British vessels to the direct voyage, after the passage of the act of parliament of 1825; and 3d, in omitting to accept the terms offered by that act." Mr. M'Lane was instructed to obviate the unfavorable impression produced by these circumstances; and, to enable him so to do, he was authorized to say to the British government, that the United States would recede from those grounds, by abolishing the discriminating duties on British vessels coming from the colonies; by repealing the provisions of the act of Congress of 1823; and by acceding to the terms of the act of parliament of 1825. The instructions then proceed to say, that the British government ought not to object to entering into this arrangement on account of the omission of the government of the United States to accept of those terms when formerly offered; that Mr. M'Lane knew of the course taken by the party now in power, in reference to the policy of the late administration on that question, and he was authorized to state to the British government that the pretensions of that administration had not been sustained by the people of the United States, and were not to be regarded as the views of the government.

Mr. M'Lane, shortly after his arrival in London, communicated to the earl of Aberdeen the grounds upon which he desired to open the negotiation. To this communication no reply was made, except one generally, professing a friendly feeling, and a desire to amicably adjust the business. The verbal conferences between the negotiators, however, continued, and the cabinet at Washington felt so desirous of regaining the trade, that toward the close of the session, a special message on the subject was sent to Congress (dated May 26, 1830), which was committed, in the house, to the committee on commerce, who the next day reported a bill authorizing the president to suspend or repeal by proclamation, the acts of Congress of 1818, 1820, and 1823, whenever he could be satisfied that Great Britain would open the West India ports, for an indefinite or a limited term, to American vessels from the United States, subject to the same duties as British vessels from the United States; and that American vessels would be permitted to carry the produce of those islands to all countries except British possessions, to which British vessels were permitted to carry it.

The ports of the United States were then to be opened to British vessels from the colonies, upon the same terms as American vessels.

After the passage of this act by Congress, it was immediately communicated to the British government, as an additional proof of the disposition of the American government to relinquish the stand it had hitherto taken on this question, and the secretary of state, in his letter of June 18, 1830, informing Mr. M'Lane of its passage, instructed him to so represent it to the British government. It was so represented; and our minister, in his letter to the earl of Aberdeen, of July 12, declared, that "the law conceded in its terms all the power in the regulation of the colonial trade to Great Britain, and that it authorized the president to confer on British vessels all those privileges, as well in the circuitous as the direct voyage, which Great Britain had at any time demanded or desired.

These concessions were at length deemed sufficient by the British government; and on the 17th of August, 1830, an answer was given by the earl of Aberdeen, in which these concessions and abandonment of a principle long contended for, are specifically recapitulated, as if to preclude the United States from again insisting upon it; a construction put upon the late act of Congress agreeable to the views of Great Britain, an intimation given that the British government contemplated an augmentation of the duties on produce imported directly from the United States, with the view of encouraging the importation through the northern colonies, and finally an assurance made that the carrying into effect of the law of Congress, would remove all difficulty in the way of the renewal of intercourse, on the footing of the act of parliament of 1825.

Upon the receipt of this answer at Washington, the president issued a proclamation, dated October 5, 1830, opening the ports of the United States to British vessels from all the British colonies on or near the North American continent, and declaring the acts of Congress of 1818, 1820, and 1823, absolutely repealed. The trade in British vessels, accordingly, at once commenced, and on the 5th of November following, the British government, by an order of council, opened the colonial ports to vessels of the United States.

The controversy was thus terminated, and, although the principle of reciprocity was so far given up as to concede to Great Britain the circuitous voyage as well as the right to encourage the indirect importation of American produce, through the northern colonies, by augmenting the duties on the direct importation, the United States, on their part, gained a participation in the direct intercourse, upon terms of reciprocity, and the additional privilege of exporting goods from the British colonies to foreign countries. The controversy resulted, substantially, to the advantage of American interests, although the principle contended for by Great Britain prevailed.*

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* American Annual Register.

A commercial treaty with the emperor of Brazil was concluded and signed at Rio Janeiro, in December, 1828, on the part of the United States, by Mr. Tudor, the American envoy to that empire, which was ratified by the president and senate in March, 1829. The president and senate also ratified, in March, 1829, a treaty of commerce with the king of Prussia, which had been negotiated at Washington, in May, 1828, by Mr. Clay, then secretary of state, and the Prussian minister. In March, 1830, Mr. Wheaton, American minister to Denmark, negotiated a treaty with that government, by which the sum of six hundred and fifty thousand dollars was recovered for spoliations on American commerce by Danish vessels. A commercial treaty, the terms of which had been negotiated at Constantinople by Mr. Offley, American consul at Smyrna, who had been authorized by Mr. Adams, in 1828, to act with Captain Crane, of the navy, on the part of the United States, was finally concluded in 1830, by three commissioners on the part of the United States, viz., Mr. Offley, Captain Biddle, of the navy, and Mr. Rhind, United States consul at Odessa; the two latter being appointed commissioners by President Jackson.

The second session of the twenty-first Congress commenced on the 6th of December, 1830, and continued to the 3d of March, 1831. The first topic which engaged the attention of Congress, was the trial of the impeachment of James H. Peck, judge of the district court of Missouri. A complaint had been made to the house of representatives, at the last session, against the judge, by Luke E. Lawless, for having committed him to prison for contempt; and, after a full investigation, it was resolved, by a vote of 123 to 49, that Judge Peck be impeached of high misdemeanors in office. It being necessary to procure the attendance of witnesses from Missouri, the trial of the impeachment was postponed from May to December following, at the next session of Congress, when the trial came on in the senate. Mr. Lawless was a counseller at law in Missouri, and had been committed by Judge Peck for contempt of court, and suspended from practising in that court for eighteen months.

For this arbitrary conduct the judge was impeached, but the senate, believing that he had proceeded upon a mistaken view of the powers of the court, refused to find him guilty upon the article of impeachment. The vote stood, guilty 21, not guilty 22.

This impeachment, however, produced a strong conviction of the necessity of limiting and defining the power of the judiciary, in relation to the law of contempts. It was universally conceded, that the common law doctrine of the English courts was inconsistent with free institutions, and entirely inapplicable to this country. Scarcely, therefore, had the senate determined upon the impeachment of Judge Peck, when a bill was introduced into the house, declaratory of the law concerning contempts of court. The bill, which greatly limited the power of the United States courts, became a law on the 2d of March, 1831.

The subject of internal improvement was again agitated at this session of Congress. The president returned the two bills mentioned in a preceding page, which he had retained at the last session, and he now gave his reasons for withholding his assent to them. He objected to the power of making internal improvements by the general government, and recommended the distribution of the surplus funds in the national treasury among the states, in proportion to the number of their representatives, to be applied by them to objects of internal improvement.

The proposition was generally regarded as evidence of the hostility of the president to the whole policy; and that part of his message being referred to the committee on internal improvement, a report was brought in by Mr. Hemphill, an administration member of the house from Pennsylvania, strongly and pointedly condemning the views contained in the message, and concluding with a resolution that it is expedient for the general government to continue to prosecute internal improvements by direct appropriations of money, or by subscriptions for stock in companies incorporated in the respective states.

This intimation on the part of the friends of internal improvement, of their determination to act on that question in defiance of the opinions of the president, was followed up by the introduction of several bills for the internal improvement of the country. The first of these bills was one making appropriations for the improvement of harbors, and removing obstructions in rivers. It passed the house by a vote of 136 yeas to 53 nays, and the senate by 28 to 6.

The decisive votes in both houses, on this bill, showed the determination of Congress to act on the subject of internal improvement, without regard to the veto of the president, and as the friends of the bill now formed more than two thirds of Congress, the executive yielded his scruples to the force of public opinion, and signed the bill. The constitutional objection to the power of the federal government, was no longer adhered to by the president, and he also gave his assent to a bill making large appropriations for carrying on certain roads and works of internal improvement, including improvements of rivers, and providing for surveys. The bill for building lighthouses passed by large majorities, and was also sanctioned by the president.

The executive thus yielded to public opinion, expressed in Congress, and by the decisive votes given in both houses, the policy of internal improvement was considered as firmly established, although the action of the federal government in relation to the system had been checked by the previous vetoes of the president.

The removal of the Indian tribes from the states of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, to the territory set apart for them west of the Mississippi river, agreeably to the act passed at the first session of the twenty-first Congress, and treaties made with the Indians, excited much attention at this time, but no further important legislation on the subject took place at the second session of the same Congress. Some difficulties occurred in the Cherokee country, in Georgia, in consequence of the withdrawal of the United States troops, and the enforcement of the state laws by the authorities of Georgia. Some missionaries among the Indians were arrested, tried, and sentenced to the penitentiary of Georgia, for residing in the Cherokee country, contrary to the law of the state, and for having refused to take the oath of allegiance to the state of Georgia. The Cherokees, being between fourteen and fifteen thousand persons east of the Mississippi, refused to remove from their territory, or even to treat for its cession. The Choctaws, a numerous tribe in Mississippi and Alabama, however, made a treaty with the United States for the surrender of their lands, and agreed to remove beyond the Mississippi.

The principal acts of general interest passed at the second session of the twenty-first Congress, besides those relating to internal improvement, were the following: To amend the copyright laws, by which the term of copyright to authors and others was extended to twenty-eight years, with the privilege of renewing the same for fourteen years more ; making appropriations for revolutionary and invalid pensioners ; to provide for the final settlement and adjustment of the claims preferred by James Monroe, ex-president, against the United States ; making appropriations for carrying into effect certain Indian treaties ; for the relief of certain insolvent debtors of the United States, extending to all debtors to the general government, except the principals on official bonds, or such as had received the public moneys and not paid the same over to the treasury ; for the continuation of the Cumberland road in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois ; confirming the grants of land made by the United States in 1819, for the encouragement of the culture of the vine and olive ; granting the control of the national road in Ohio to that state, for the purpose of erecting gates and tollhouses thereon ; and an act allowing duties on imports to be paid at Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Nashville, and other ports on the waters of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.

The alienation of feeling between the president and a large portion of his early and prominent supporters, in consequence of his dispute with the vice-president, had existed some months before it was generally suspected ; and although an angry and acrimonious correspondence was carried on between the president and vice-president, in reference to the Seminole campaign, appearances were preserved, and in the divisions which frequently took place in the senate, the executive nominations had the support of the vice-president and his friends. It was intimated shortly before the close of the session, notwithstanding efforts were made to adjust the difficulties, that the correspondence alluded to would be soon laid before the American people. Pursuant to that intimation, the correspondence was published at the adjournment of Congress.

This decisive step plainly indicated a division among the friends of the administration; and as the influence of the vice-president predominated in the southern states, and he was not without friends in the middle states, his appeal began to affect injuriously the administration itself, from a conviction that its head was operated upon by improper feelings and prejudices.

These indications of the withdrawal of public confidence were immediately perceived at Washington, and, with the view of producing a reunion of the party until after the ensuing presidential election, arrangements were made for an entire reorganization of the cabinet. From the moment when the breach was produced between the president and vice-president, the policy of the administration was controlled by the secretary of state, and was in accordance with his opinions, so far as they were understood.*

Previous to this it was understood that the president determined, contrary to the practice of his predecessors, to hold no cabinet councils, and therefore no definite plan of policy was adopted as the result of the joint deliberations of his constitutional advisers. It was charged by the opposition, but denied by the friends of the president, that his opinions were influenced, and appointments to office effected, through the instrumentality of a self-constituted combination, which received the name of "the kitchen cabinet." The persons who were said to compose this cabal were principally office-holders at the seat of government, having subordinate situations in the treasury and other departments. Whether true or false, the existence of this secret influence upon the action of the executive was constantly asserted by the opposition, throughout the greater part of General Jackson's administration, and allusions to the subject will be constantly found repeated in the party journals of the times.

It had now become a desirable object to effect the re-election of President Jackson. The difficulty of uniting the dominant party upon a successor, had induced him to relinquish his professed intention of serving but one term, and he was now formally announced as a candidate for re-election. He was nominated by his friends in the legislature of Pennsylvania, and at the caucus of the Jackson members of the legislature of New York, on the 13th of February, 1830, it was resolved that General Jackson ought again to be nominated for the presidency. This movement, (says Mr. Hammond, in his political history of New York) was probably made at the suggestion of Mr. Van Buren, or some of his confidential friends. It was well known that Mr. Van Buren expected to be the successor of General Jackson. This would afford evidence of the ardent personal attachment of Mr. Van Buren's immediate friends to General Jackson, and aid in securing to that gentleman the continued confidence and support of the president.

General Jackson had, before his election in 1828, expressed an opinion that the president ought to hold his office but one term, and had recommended an amendment of the constitution to render the president ineligible to two successive elections. But in 1831 he yielded to the importunity of his political friends, and consented to be a candidate for re-election.

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* American Annual Register.

It is more than probable that the friends of Mr. Calhoun looked to him as the successor of General Jackson, and expected, from the repeated declarations of the president, that he would not allow himself to be again a candidate. They could not, therefore, have learned with much complacency, that the president had changed his determination. Accordingly, it will have been perceived that the solicitations that General Jackson would consent to a re-election, originated, generally, with the friends of Mr. Van Buren.

In this posture of affairs the country was astonished by the information promulgated on the 20th of April, 1831, through the official journal, at the seat of government, that the cabinet ministers of the president had resigned, and the most lively curiosity was manifested to learn the causes of this unexpected movement. The letters of the several members of the cabinet were published, but they served to inflame rather than to gratify the public feeling. The secretary of war, Mr. Eaton, first resigned, without assigning any reason, on the 7th of April, and he was followed by the secretary of state, Mr. Van Buren, on the 11th of April, who assigned as a reason, that circumstances beyond his control had presented him before the public as a candidate for the succession to the presidency, and that the injurious effects necessarily resulting from a cabinet minister's holding that relation to the country, had left him only the alternative of retiring from the administration, or of submitting to a self-disfranchisement, hardly reconcilable with propriety or self-respect. This was considered a curious reason, as Mr. Van Buren had not been formally nominated as a candidate, and men's thoughts had scarcely wandered beyond the election of 1832 to that of 1836.

Intimations having been made to the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Branch, secretary of the navy, expressive of a wish on the part of the president that they should resign their commissions, their resignations were forthwith made, and were accepted by the president, in formal letters, expressing his satisfaction with their official conduct, and stating his motive for requiring their resignation. This was, to use his own words, that having concluded to accept the resignation of the secretaries of state and of war, he had come to the conviction that he must entirely renew his cabinet. "Its members had been invited by me," he said, "to the stations they occupied. It had come together in great harmony, and as a unit. Under the circumstances in which I found myself, I could not but perceive the propriety of selecting a cabinet composed of entirely new materials, as being calculated, in this respect at least, to command public confidence, and satisfy public opinion."

The intimation of his intention to reorganize his cabinet, was-also considered to extend to the attorney-general, Mr. Berrien, who was then on a visit to Georgia. His resignation was accordingly tendered to the president upon his return to the seat of government on the 15th of June.

The cabinet had been partially reorganized about a month previous, by the appointment of the secretaries of state and of the navy. The arrangements, however, were not finally completed until after the resignation of the attorney-general; and it was then generally understood that the postmaster-general would not follow the example of the other members of the administration—it being deemed improper for him to retire, while the charge made in the senate, just before the adjournment, of his having behaved corruptly in his office, remained neither withdrawn, nor explained, nor investigated.*

Notwithstanding two months had elapsed between the resignations of the secretaries and that of the attorney-general, nothing transpired to throw light upon the real cause of the dissolution of the cabinet. The mystery was finally developed by a communication of the attorney-general to the public, in which the cause of this want of harmony in the administration was attributed to a determination to compel the families of the dismissed members of the cabinet to associate with the wife of the secretary of war. By this statement it appeared that these ladies had, in accordance with the general understanding of the female part of society at Washington, declined to visit the family of the secretary of war, and that this neglect, being resented by that gentleman, had produced a coolness between him and the heads of those families. As the president warmly espoused the feelings of the secretary of war, as of an old and confidential friend, it was rumored, early in the year, that their removal would be a consequence of this resentment; and the attorney-general stated, that about that time a confidential friend of the president (Richard M. Johnson) called upon him and the other refractory members, as from the president, and intimated to them, that unless they would consent to at least a formal intercourse between their families and that of the secretary of war, he had determined to remove them from office. They replied, that while they felt bound to maintain a frank and harmonious intercourse with their colleagues, they would not permit any interference with the social relations of their families, and wholly refused to comply with the request. Other friends, however, interfered, and the president was induced to waive any further prosecution of the subject at that time.†

To that refusal, however, he attributed the want of harmony of the cabinet, and its consequent dissolution.

This charge, from a high and unquestioned source, imputing an interference with the private and domestic relations of the members of his cabinet, produced a strong impression upon the public mind; and with the view of obviating that unfavorable impression, a different version was soon furnished of these transactions, by the friends of the administration. According to this version, it seemed that the president, believing that a combination had been entered into by the vice-president and a portion of his cabinet, to drive the secretary of war from the administration, by excluding his family from society, had determined on reorganizing his cabinet, unless its members would consent to meet upon terms of harmonious intercourse. With the view of averting that result, Colonel R. M. Johnson called upon the members of the cabinet, and suggested to them the propriety of associating with the family of the secretary of war, or at least of assenting to a formal intercourse, which would be all that the president could desire. In making this proposition, Colonel Johnson asserted, that he was actuated solely by a desire to prevent a dissolution of the cabinet; that it was upon his own authority; and that he was in no shape authorized by the president to make any such requisition.

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* American Annual Register.

† Ibid.

This version was sustained by an authorized publication on the part of the president, while that of the attorney-general was supported by the testimony of the secretaries of the navy and of the treasury.*

The consequence of this explosion of the cabinet, and the quarrel between the president and vice-president before mentioned, was to place the latter, and his friends generally, in opposition to the administration, and to advance the political fortunes of Mr. Van Buren, in consequence of his close connexion with General Jackson and those devoted to his interest.

The new cabinet, which was not completely organized until late in the summer of 1831, was constituted as follows:—

Edward Livingston, of Louisiana, secretary of state; Louis M'Lane, of Delaware, secretary of the treasury; Lewis Cass, of Ohio, secretary of war; Levi Woodbury, of New Hampshire, secretary of the navy; Roger B. Taney, of Maryland, attorney-general.

This cabinet was not only superior to that which preceded it, but might fairly compare, in point of talent and ability, with most of those of previous administrations; and its character furnished strong testimony of the tribute paid to public opinion in the selection of his advisers, by a chief magistrate of great personal popularity.

Before the organization of this cabinet, an opposition was formed to the re-election of General Jackson, on various grounds. This party, in some portions of the Union called "national republican," manifested a disposition to support Henry Clay, of Kentucky, as its candidate for the presidency. He was accordingly nominated by the legislatures of several states, and a national nominating convention was recommended to be held at Baltimore, on the 12th of December, 1831.

The opposition party which rallied under the name of "national republican," was composed principally of the friends of the late administration, and those who had opposed Mr. Adams, but were now dissatisfied with the course of General Jackson, excepting the friends of the vice-president, who formed a distinct section of the opposition.

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* American Annual Register.

Another party, at first merely local, had arisen previous to these events, was fast gathering strength, and had now so far extended itself as to assume consequence as a national party, and claimed the right of being consulted as to the candidates to be nominated for president and vice-president. This was called the anti-masonic party, and had its origin in the abduction and supposed murder of William Morgan, a citizen of western New York, which affair took place in 1826, in consequence of an alleged violation of his masonic obligations, and a disclosure, real or pretended, of the secrets of freemasonry. This caused the organization of a political party in the western part of the state of New York, which gradually extended into some of the adjoining states, upon the simple ground of hostility to masonry.

Having met with partial success in elections in several of the states, the anti-masons held a national convention at Philadelphia, in September, 1830, which was attended by delegates from eleven of the northern and middle states. After adopting various proceedings against masonry, they recommended a national convention to be held at Baltimore, in September, 1831, for the purpose of nominating candidates for president and vice-president of the United States.

The effect of the political organization of the anti-masons was to compel a more strict and intimate union among the adhering members of the fraternity, and to induce them to exercise a more direct influence in the politics of the country, in the hope of crushing a party whose avowed object was the annihilation of their order. In some parts of the country, where the leading national republicans showed a disposition to unite with the anti-masons, many of the most zealous masons forsook their political association with the former party, and, to oppose the anti-masonic party with efficiency, joined the ranks of the administration.

Thus the opposition to General Jackson seemed destined to be as much thwarted by their own divisions as by the discipline and concert prevailing in the party sustaining his administration. It was, indeed, believed that it would be practicable to concentrate the votes of the anti-masons and national republicans on one candidate for the presidency. Mr. Clay being a mason, his nomination by the anti-masons was out of the question. When the anti-masonic convention assembled at Baltimore, in September, 1831, it was expected that John M'Lean, of Ohio, formerly postmaster-general, and appointed by General Jackson a judge of the supreme court, would receive the nomination of that party for the presidency, with a view of uniting on him the different sections of the opposition. Certain masonic leaders of the national republicans having intimated a determination to withhold their support from a union so formed, Judge M'Lean, probably for this, as well as other reasons, declined being considered a candidate. The anti-masonic convention, therefore, nominated William Wirt, of Maryland, formerly attorney-general of the United States, for president, and Amos Ellmaker, of Pennsylvania, for vice-president.

The national republicans, on their part, professed great confidence in the integrity and qualifications of Mr. Wirt, but insisted that they could not with honor sacrifice Mr. Clay to what they denominated an unreasonable prejudice, nor could they, consistently with their self-respect, give up the candidate of the great majority of the opposition, to quiet the scruples of the minority.

Shortly after his resignation as secretary of state, Mr. Van Buren received from the president the appointment of minister to England, and embarked for London in August, during the recess of the senate.

The twenty-second Congress commenced its first session on the 5th of December, 1831, and continued the same until the 16th of July, 1832. The elections had evinced a large majority of the members chosen to the house of representatives in favor of the administration, but the vote for speaker exhibited a considerable increase in the strength of the opposition, although divided. The candidate of the administration, Andrew Stevenson, was elected by 98 votes, against 97 for all other persons; thus receiving the exact number necessary to constitute a choice. In the senate, Samuel Smith resumed the chair as president *pro tempore.*

The appointments made during the recess were nominated to the senate early in December, and on the 10th of January the committee on foreign relations reported in favor of Martin Van Buren, minister to England, Aaron Vail, secretary of legation, and Louis M'Lane, secretary of the treasury. On the 13th of January the other nominations were confirmed, but that of Mr. Van Buren was laid on the table, by the casting vote of the vice-president. When this nomination came before the senate, it was warmly opposed on two distinct grounds. Four of the senators, who were friends of the vice-president, declared themselves opposed to its confirmation, on account of the agency of Mr. Van Buren in breaking up the late cabinet, and in the domestic politics of the country.

The other members who opposed his appointment, professed to be governed by higher considerations. They contended, that in his instructions to Mr. M'Lane, in relation to the West India trade, he had evinced a manifest disposition to establish a distinction between his country and his party; to make interest at a foreign court for that party, rather than for the country; to persuade the British government, that it was for its advantage to maintain in the United States the ascendency of that party; and that the whole tone of those instructions was derogatory to the dignity and independence of the United States.

The expressions in these instructions were regarded as placing the American government in a supplicating attitude before the British ministry; as asking favors of England for the course taken by the dominant party in opposing the pretensions of the United States in the late controversy; and as making a merit of that opposition in the eyes of a foreign government.

After a full discussion on this nomination, with closed doors, the senate finally, by the casting vote of the vice-president, resolved not to confirm the nomination, yeas 23, nays 23. Mr. Van Buren was accordingly rejected, and, soon after having presented his credentials, was compelled to return to the United States.

As this was the first time that a minister of the United States had been compelled to return from his post, on account of the refusal of the senate to concur in his appointment, great excitement was produced by this decision. The reasons assigned were subjected to severe criticism, and the rejection was by many imputed to party feeling and personal jealousy.

The friends of the president were urged to sustain him against an attack, which it was said was aimed at him. He was induced to come before the public, and avow himself to be the author of the objectionable instructions; and his party was persuaded to bring forward Mr. Van Buren as a candidate for the vice-presidency, as the only means of vindicating the honor of the president from a censure which, by his own confession, ought to have been bestowed upon him. It was also urged, that if the senate had been sincere in asserting that the character of those instructions was a disqualification for a diplomatic office, Mr. M'Lane would have shared the same fate with Mr. Van Buren. If the instructing a minister to invite a foreign government to interfere in the domestic politics of the United States, furnished a sufficient reason why the author should not represent the republic abroad, surely the execution of those instructions ought to have excluded that minister from the cabinet councils, where measures to vindicate the honor and advance the interests of the country are originated.

In the contest that ensued, consequently, the opposition lost the advantage of the principle upon which it had rested, the recall of Mr. Van Buren, and left the public to infer that other motives had contributed to swell the vote against his appointment.*

Among the most urgent subjects of consideration at the present session of Congress, was the apportionment of representation according to the census of 1830. By that census, the southern and eastern states had lost a portion of their relative weight, and the western states had acquired a greater preponderance than before. With the view of giving each state the power intended by the constitution, at the next presidential election, steps were taken to bring this subject at an early day before the consideration of the house, and on the fourth of January, Mr. Polk, from a select committee, reported a bill fixing the ratio of representation under the fifth census of the United States. By that report the ratio was fixed at one representative for forty-eight thousand inhabitants, according to the federal enumeration, which would increase the number of members to 237. This ratio was at first adopted by the house, after a long debate, but afterward stricken out, and the number fixed at forty-seven thousand seven hundred, in which form the bill finally passed, and became a law in May, 1832. The senate amended the bill, and sent it back to the house, but the house disagreed to the amendment, and the senate receded therefrom. By the census of 1790, the ratio fixed on was thirty-three thousand; by that of 1800 the same ratio was continued; in 1810 it was fixed at thirty-five thousand; in 1820, forty thousand; and by the census of 1830, forty-seven thousand seven hundred.

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* American Annual Register.

Many subjects of great interest came under the consideration of Congress at this session; and among them none excited more of the public attention than that of the renewal of the charter of the bank of the United States. That institution was incorporated, as we have stated, in 1816, during Mr. Madison's administration, by a democratic Congress, for the term of twenty years; of course, the charter would expire in 1836. In the first message of General Jackson to Congress, namely, in 1829, he expressed an opinion against the constitutionality and expediency of the bank, and an assertion that it had failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency. As no intimation had been been given of an intention to apply for a renewal of the charter, and as no specific abuses were pointed out deserving examination, this intimation was regarded as an indication of a strong hostility against that institution, on the part of the president, originating in causes not open to the public eye. The message had the effect of diminishing the value of the stock six per cent. lower than before the opening of Congress. The subject, however, was referred to the committees on finance, and reports adverse to the president's views having been brought in, the stock recovered itself, and finally attained a higher rate than the original price.

The attack was renewed in the next annual message, in 1830; and Congress was recommended to inquire into the expediency of renewing the charter of the existing bank, with the view of substituting in its place a bank based on the public deposites, but without the power of making loans, or purchasing property. This recommendation met with no better reception than that contained in the previous message. No steps were taken by either house upon the subject, at that session. The bank made no application to Congress, and when Mr. Benton asked for leave to introduce a resolution in the senate adverse to the renewal of the charter, that body refused permission by a vote of 23 nays to 20 ayes. The stock maintained its price in market, and in the message of the president at the opening of the twenty-second Congress, in December, 1831, his objections to the bank were expressed for the third time.

The directors and stockholders of the bank now deemed it proper to submit the claims of the institution for an extension of its charter to Congress. A memorial to this effect was therefore presented, on the part of the bank of the United States, and no sooner was this determined upon, than the friends of the president began to express their dissatisfaction at being forced to act upon the subject at this time. It was too early, they said, notwithstanding the president had not deemed it too early for Congress to act upon the matter two years before; and they sought to postpone the consideration of the question. This course was too inconsistent to succeed, and the memorial having been presented in the senate, on the 9th of January, by Mr. Dallas, an administration senator from Pennsylvania, it was referred to a select committee for consideration. On the 13th of March this committee reported in favor of renewing the charter for fifteen years, with certain modifications. A bill accompanied this report, which was ordered to a second reading, and then laid upon the table of the senate, until after the report of the committee appointed by the house of representatives to inquire into the affairs of the bank.

It was in that body that the main battle concerning the bank was to be fought. The memorial of the bank was presented by Mr. M'Duffie, of South Carolina, and referred to the committee of ways and means, by whom, on the 10th of February, a report was made in favor of the renewal of the charter. A motion was then made by the opponents of the bank for a committee of inquiry into the affairs of the bank. Two reports were made by this committee: one from the majority, adverse to the bank, and another from the minority, favorable to the institution.

On the 22d of May, the bill for a renewal of the charter was taken up in the senate, and after a long discussion and undergoing various amendments, the bill finally passed the senate, on the 11th of June, by a vote of yeas 28, noes 20. When it came into the house, strenuous exertions were made to postpone its consideration, but it was made the special order of the day for the 18th of June. The house being then engaged on the tariff, it was not taken up until the 30th of June, and it finally passed that body on the 3d of July, by 107 yeas, to 85 nays; and an amendment proposed by Mr. M'Duffie, being concurred in by the senate, the bill was sent to the president for his decision. It was by many apprehended that he would resort to the mode previously adopted by him, and that he would retain it until after the adjournment of Congress. To prevent this, the senate declined acting on the resolution of adjournment until the bill had been sent to him for concurrence, and then the 16th of July was inserted, so as to leave him full ten days, exclusive of Sundays, by which he was compelled to return the bill to Congress, or to permit it to become a law.

On the 10th of July, the next day after the senate had fixed the time of adjournment, the president sent a message to that body, stating his reasons for refusing his signature to the bill.

This veto-message having been read, Mr. Webster moved that the senate should proceed to reconsider the bill the next day. At the appointed hour, the bill being again brought under the consideration of the senate, Mr. Webster reviewed the reasons and arguments of the executive at length, to which Mr. White, of Tennessee, replied; and the discussion was continued until the 13th of July, when the question being taken on the passage of the bill, notwithstanding the objections of the president, the senate divided—yeas 22, nays 19; and the bill, not having received two thirds of the votes, was of course rejected.

The president's bank-veto message was circulated extensively throughout the Union, and proved a popular document in his favor in its effects on the public mind, wherever the bank was but little known, or in ill favor. Many of the political friends of the president, however, as well among the people, as in Congress, differed in opinion from him on the subject of the bank. In the state of Pennsylvania, where the bank was located, and where the institution was popular, the president's course was severely censured, and the strength of the administration so much diminished, as at one period to make its success doubtful. At a very large meeting of citizens of Philadelphia, composed of his former political friends, in July, 1832, soon after the veto of the president, resolutions were adopted disapproving of his course with regard to the bank and other public measures, and deprecating his re-election to the presidency as a national calamity, which they pledge themselves " to use all lawful and honorable means to avert, by opposing the re-election of Andrew Jackson."

The subject of the public lands was another matter of importance which was agitated. The investigations which were ordered preliminary to modifying the tariff, afforded an occasion to urge an inquiry into the expediency of reducing the price of the public lands, as connected with the revenue. On the 22d of March, 1832, Mr. Bibb, of Kentucky, an administration senator, moved a resolution to that effect, and the committee on manufactures in the senate was directed to make the inquiry.

The course of the senate, in referring an inquiry on the subject of the public lands to that committee was considered singular and unusual, and it was charged by the opposition that the object was to embarrass Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, who was chairman of the committee of manufactures, and was also one of the opposition candidates for president of the United States. The public lands possessed by the United States, situated in the western states and territories, had been acquired by cessions to the general government from the original Atlantic states; by the purchase of Louisiana and Florida; and by treaties of purchase with the Indians. The principal inducement to their cession by the states to the Union, was, to aid in the payment of the debt incurred by the war of the revolution, for which they were at first pledged. In view of the ultimate payment of that debt, President Jefferson had, in 1806, suggested the appropriation of the proceeds of the sales of the lands to works of internal improvement, and to the support of education.

The inquiries which the committee on manufactures were directed by the senate to make and report upon were—1. The expediency of reducing the price of the public lands; and, 2. On the expediency of transferring the public territory to the states within which it lies, upon reasonable terms. On the 16th of April, Mr. Clay made a report against the expediency of both these propositions. This report vindicates the wisdom of the policy heretofore adopted by the government; but inasmuch as the revenue derived from imposts was deemed adequate to the public expenditures, and as some dissatisfaction prevailed in the new states at the exemption of the lands belonging to the United States from taxation, until five years after they had been sold, it recommends that, besides the five per cent. hitherto reserved from the proceeds of the public lands for making internal improvements, ten per cent. in addition should be reserved for internal improvements within the limits of the respective states.

The residue of the proceeds a majority of the committee recommended to be divided among all the states, in proportion to their representation in Congress, to be applied, under the direction and at the discretion of the state governments, to education, internal improvement, colonization, or to the payment of any debt already contracted for internal improvement.

In order to test the propriety of this modification of the existing system by experience, the act accompanying the report was limited to five years; and in case the United States should within that time become involved in war with a foreign power, the appropriation was to cease immediately. The bill passed the senate, after considerable debate, near the close of the session, by a vote of 26 to 18, and was sent to the house for concurrence, where the further consideration of the subject was postponed until the next session of Congress.

The subject of internal improvement was discussed at length during this session. The members from the south, and the supporters of the administration from the eastern states and from New York, were decidedly opposed to appropriations of this character; and a systematic effort was generally made by them to defeat the bill introduced making appropriations for that object, including the improvement of certain rivers and harbors, the Cumberland and other roads, surveys, &c. The bill finally passed both houses, and having received the sanction of the president, became a law. By the act, as amended in its passage, various appropriations were made for works not enumerated: it having been extended by these amendments to an amount exceeding one million two hundred thousand dollars, and altogether beyond its original scope—adding thus an additional sanction to the policy of internal improvement.

The other appropriations for internal improvement were contained in a bill for the improvement of certain harbors and rivers, which was not taken up in the house until the 25th of May. Certain amendments were then made; and on the 1st of June, a motion by Mr. Polk, of Tennessee, to strike out the enacting clause, was lost—yeas 72, nays 101—and the bill finally passed, 95 to 67. In the senate, it was taken up on the 3d of July, and in the course of the discussion which ensued, Mr. Clay "expressed his extreme surprise that the president, after putting his veto on the appropriations for works of such public utility as the Maysville and Rockville roads, should have sanctioned the internal improvement bill in which appropriations were made to a very large amount, and which differed in principle not one particle from the one he had rejected. What had been the course of the present administration? They first held appropriations for certain objects of internal improvement to be unconstitutional, and then sanctioned appropriations for other objects depending entirely on the same principles with those held to be unconstitutional; and the result has been to open an entire new field of internal improvement. Favorite objects had been considered constitutional, while objects in states not so much cherished, had been held to be local." Mr. Miller, of South Carolina, said: "We have just heard that the president has signed the internal improvement bill, containing appropriations for the most limited and local purposes. I hope we shall never again be referred to the veto of the Maysville and Rockville roads, as a security against this system. The senate and house of representatives, and the president, all concur in this power."

The harbor bill, as it was called, passed the senate, and was sent to the president for his approbation, on the 13th of July, three days before the close of the session. This bill which did not differ in principle from the internal improvement bill which he had signed, the president resolved not to sanction, but retained the bill until after the adjournment of Congress, and thus prevented it from becoming a law.

The same course was adopted by the president, in relation to a bill providing for the repayment to the respective states of all interest actually paid, for moneys borrowed by them on account of the federal government, and expended in the service of the United States. This bill was passed by both houses at this session, but when it came into the hands of the president, it was doomed to the fate of the harbor bill, and was negatived in this novel and indirect manner, to which the opposition gave the name of "a pocket veto."

The president having, in his annual message, recommended a modification of the tariff of duties on imports, the subject was referred to the committee on manufactures, which, as well as the committee of ways and means, had been selected by the speaker (who was hostile to the protective system) with a view to a reduction of the tariff. Mr. John Quincy

Adams was placed at the head of the committee on manufactures, which, on the 23d of May, reported a new tariff bill. Mr. M'Duffie, chairman of the committee of ways and means, had, at an earlier period of the session, namely, on the 8th of February, reported a bill intended to meet the ultra opponents of the protective system, and the report which accompanied it denounced the tariff system as imposing a tax upon the south for the benefit of the north. The secretary of the treasury, Mr. M'Lane, on the 27th of April, also transmitted to Congress, in compliance with a resolution of the house, a bill for a reduction of the tariff, with a report giving his views on this topic.

Before the report of the secretary was printed, Mr. M'Duffie brought on the discussion of the bill reported by him. On the 1st of June a motion was made to strike out the first section, which was carried—81 yeas to 41 nays.

Mr. Adams's bill was then taken up, and after a long and animated discussion, it passed the house, with few amendments, by 132 yeas to 65 nays, many of the opponents of protection voting in the affirmative. The bill finally passed the senate on the 9th of July, yeas 32, nays 16, and receiving the sanction of the president, became a law.

This act provided for a great reduction of the revenue, and for no small diminution of the duties on the protected articles of domestic manufacture, but it was a direct admission of the principle of protection, and it was so regarded by all parties. It was, however, a great concession on the part of the friends of the protective system, to the advocates of "free trade," and as such, a general expectation prevailed that it would be received by the dominant party in South Carolina, and that a temporary calm at least would succeed the agitation upon this exciting topic.

Different views. it appeared, were entertained by the leaders of that party, and the very day after the passage of this act, the representatives of South Carolina, who thought nullification the rightful remedy, met at Washington, and published an address to the people of South Carolina on the subject of the tariff. In that address they assert, that in the act just passed the duties upon the protected articles were augmented, while the diminution was made only in the duties upon the unprotected articles ; that in this manner the burden of supporting the government was thrown exclusively on the southern states, and the other states gained more than they lost by the operations of the revenue system.*

The address concludes thus : "They will not pretend to suggest the appropriate remedy, but after expressing their solemn and deliberate conviction that the protecting system must now be regarded as the settled policy of the country, and that all hope of relief from Congress is irrecoverably gone, they leave it with you, the sovereign power of the state, to determine whether the rights and liberties which you received as a precious inheritance from an illustrious ancestry, shall be tamely surrendered without a struggle, or transmitted undiminished to your posterity."

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* American Annual Register.

Meetings were accordingly held in South Carolina, denouncing the tariff, which had just received the sanction of Congress, and pledging the persons attending to support the state government in any measures it might adopt to resist it. Strong efforts were made to excite the people of the state against the general government, and notwithstanding the exertions of a respectable portion of the community, who remained faithful to the Union, they succeeded in obtaining a majority in both houses of the legislature.

As soon as this was ascertained, Governor Hamilton convened the legislature, which met at Columbia, on the 22d of October, 1832. Immediately upon its assembling, the tariff question was taken up, and a bill was reported authorizing a convention to meet at Columbia on the 19th of next month. This bill finally passed on the 25th of October, in the senate, 31 to 13, and in the house, 96 to 25.

The state convention met at the time appointed, and the governor was elected president of that body. The annual meeting of Congress was at hand, and if any impression was to be made upon that body, it could only be done by prompt and decisive movements. Upon the people of the United States generally no impression could be made. A general sentiment pervaded the Union, that it was better to appeal to the power of the government to enforce the laws, than longer to encourage a spirit of insubordination by yielding to demands which, originating in a feeling of arrogance, were rendered more unreasonable by concession. Still, however, all hasty movements were deprecated, and so long as the nullifiers confined themselves to discussions and resolves, any interference on the part of the general government would have been deemed improper. Nothing but actual resistance to the laws of the United States could justify such interposition. The time of forbearance, however, was now rapidly passing away.

The committee of the convention, to whom was intrusted the duty of reporting what steps should be taken, recommended the passage of an ordinance, which declared all the acts of Congress imposing duties on imported goods, and more especially the laws of May 19, 1828, and July 14, 1832, to be null and void within the state of South Carolina. It further provided, that no appeal should be permitted to the supreme court of the United States in any question concerning the validity of the ordinance, or of the laws passed to give effect thereto. It also prohibited the authorities of the state, or of the United States, from enforcing the payment of duties within the state, from and after the 1st of February, 1833. There were various other provisions in this ordinance, which concluded with a declaration that any attempt on the part of the general government to reduce the state to obedience, or to enforce the revenue laws, otherwise than through the civil tribunals, would be deemed inconsistent with the longer continuance of South Carolina in the Union, and that the people of the state would forthwith proceed to organize a separate and independent government. By this ordinance, the Rubicon was passed, and the state government forthwith proceeded to take the necessary steps to carry it into effect.

The legislature, which met directly after the adjournment of the convention, on the 27th of November, 1832, passed the laws required by the ordinance. These related principally to the nullification of the revenue laws of the United States, by prohibiting their enforcement within the state. An additional act was passed, authorizing the governor to call the militia into service to resist any attempt on the part of the government of the United States to enforce the revenue laws; and to render the resistance of the state effectual, he was empowered to call out the whole military force of the state, and to accept of the services of volunteers for the same purpose. Ten thousand stand of small arms, and the requisite quantity of military munitions, were ordered to be purchased, and any acts done in pursuance of that law, were to be held lawful in the state courts.

These proceedings by the party that had obtained possession of the state government, brought on an issue between the state and federal governments, that could no longer be neglected. The very existence of the government depended upon its decision. South Carolina had set at defiance the authority of the general government, and declared that no umpire should be admitted to decide between the contending parties.

It had, in its capacity as a sovereign state, decided the question for itself, and its decision could be reversed only by superior force. In taking this stand, the nullifiers apparently had not perceived, that, although their principles were precisely those which Georgia had carried into effect in her affairs with the Indians, the subject-matter more directly affected the existence of the government. Five sixths of the revenue were derived from the customs, and the abolition of the duties in one state, would necessarily destroy the revenue system, and of course suspend the operations of the federal government. While the nullification of Georgia only tended to bring the federal government into contempt, and weakened the bonds of the Union, that of South Carolina at once severed those bonds, and arrested the action of the government.

At such a crisis, the president felt that there was no room for hesitation. The difficulty must be met, not only to save the Union from being broken up, but to protect those citizens of South Carolina who still adhered to its standard, from the horrors of civil discord. The president determined to come at once to an issue with the nullifiers; to place the powers of the government upon the broad ground, that the federal judiciary was the only proper tribunal to decide upon the constitutionality of its laws; and to enforce the revenue acts with an entire disregard to the pretended rights of sovereignty which were assumed by the state of South Carolina.

With that view, all the disposable military force was ordered to assemble at Charleston, and a sloop-of-war was sent to that port to protect the federal officers, in case of necessity, in the execution of their duty. On the 10th of December, the eloquent and energetic proclamation of the president was issued, plainly and forcibly stating the nature of the American government, and the supremacy of the federal authorities in all matters intrusted to their care, and exhorting the citizens of South Carolina not to persist in a course which must bring upon their state the force of the confederacy, and expose the Union to the hazard of dissolution.*

In noticing the events of this momentous period, we must return to the doings of the twenty-second Congress at their first session. In addition to the acts already mentioned, laws were passed for the adjustment of the claims of South Carolina against the United States; to provide the means of extending the benefits of vaccination to the Indian tribes; a new patent law for the encouragement of useful inventions, by which the rights and privileges of patentees were greatly improved and extended. An additional pension law was passed, by which provision was made for all those who had served in the war of the revolution six months; and thus a great number of persons in the decline of life, and most of them in reduced circumstances, received the bounty of the government, who could not avail themselves of the former laws granting pensions.

Some difficulties occurred with the Indian tribes on the northwestern frontier of the United States during the year 1832. A treaty had been made in 1830 with the Sacs and Foxes, by which they agreed to cede their lands to the United States, and to remove beyond the Mississippi. As they did not promptly comply with the treaty, and one band, under a noted chief named Black Hawk, evinced a determination to maintain possession of their old village, John Reynolds, governor of Illinois, chose to construe their continued residence in the ceded territory as an invasion of the state; and, under his authority to protect the state from invasion, he ordered out seven hundred militia to remove the Indians beyond the Mississippi, according to the treaty.

This interference with the peculiar duties of the federal government compelled the officer commanding the United States troops in that quarter to co-operate with him, in order to prevent a collision between the state militia and the Indians. Overawed by the imposing force brought against them, they yielded to necessity, and crossed the Mississippi; but gathering strength on the western bank of the river, and exasperated at the harsh treatment they had received, Black Hawk and his party resolved on commencing a predatory war on the frontier settlements. In the month of March, 1832, Black Hawk assembled a band of Sacs and Foxes, which, united with the Winnebagoes, under the control of their prophet, were about one thousand in number, and crossed the Mississippi in a hostile manner. They afterward annoyed the people in the mining district of Wisconsin, and murdered a number of defenceless families. The alarm became general on the frontier, and many settlers fled from their farms. The militia were called out, and, joined with about four hundred United States regular troops under the command of General Atkinson, pursued the Indians ; and after a campaign of about two months, during which two engagements were fought, and the Indians lost over two hundred men killed, the war was brought to an end. Black Hawk was taken prisoner by a party of friendly Indians, and he, with the prophet and other leaders, was taken by order of the government through the principal cities and towns on the seaboard, to show them the power of the United States, after which they gave no further trouble. Treaties were made with the offending tribes, by which they agreed to compensate for the expense of the war by a cession of a valuable part of their territory, and to immediately remove to the west bank of the Mississippi. The United States stipulated to pay thirty thousand dollars annually to the three tribes for twenty-seven years, and other provisions were made for their improvement and civilization.

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* American Annual Register

While these troubles occurred on the northwestern frontier, the inhabitants of Maine, on the northeastern border of the United States, were excited by an unpleasant collision arising out of the award of the king of the Netherlands concerning the boundary line between the United States and the British provinces. In conformity with the treaty of Ghent, the disputed boundary between the territory of the United States and that of Great Britain, on the northeastern frontier, was in 1829 submitted to the arbitration of the king of the Netherlands, who, in January, 1831, gave his decision. In this award, however, the king did not undertake to decide the question submitted to him, but recommended a new boundary not contemplated by either party. Against this decision the American minister at the Hague immediately protested, as being beyond the authority of the arbiter : he having decided upon questions not submitted to him, and left undecided the questions in dispute. The British government, having gained the principal object for which it contended, namely, an uninterrupted communication between its provinces, signified its willingness to carry the award into effect.

The state of Maine, on its part, protested against the award as invalid, and denied the authority of the federal government to cede any portion of the territory of a state, by treaty or convention. In this unsettled state the controversy remained ; when in September, 1831, the inhabitants of Madawaska, on the disputed territory, in conformity with a law of the state of Maine, passed at the last session of the legislature, met and elected a representative to the general assembly of that state. Upon hearing this, the British provincial authorities sent a military force and arrested three persons who had taken part in the town meeting, and carried them to the province jail for trial. Here they were tried, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. This act excited great indignation among the people of Maine. The governor and council took measures to protect the territory from invasion ; and a remonstrance against the provincial proceedings being made by the secretary of state to the British minister at Washington, the release of the prisoners was obtained.

In this state of things a negotiation was commenced by the administration of the general government with the state of Maine, with the view of obtaining its consent to the cession of the territory in dispute ; and William P. Preble was appointed an agent on the part of the state, to arrange the terms upon which Maine would consent to the execution of the treaty. After some negotiation, Mr. Preble addressed a letter to the governor of Maine, advising the state to cede to the United States her claim to the territory beyond the boundary line recommended by the arbiter, for an ample indemnity. The motive to this advice was not communicated to the public, nor was any information given as to what indemnity was expected ; but a confidential message was transmitted by Governor Smith to the legislature, informing that body of the advice of his agent, and stating his belief that an adequate compensation would be made by the United States for the loss of territory. As this belief was founded upon a secret arrangement between the agent and the United States government, the terms were not communicated to the legislature ; but enough was stated to leading members of the administration party, who were in the majority in both branches of that body, to secure the passage of resolutions in favor of a treaty between the state and the United States, in relation to the cession. This treaty, however, was not to be binding upon the state, until it had been formally ratified by the legislature ; and the resolutions were directed to be sent to the governor of Massachusetts, in order that measures might be taken by that state for the protection of her interests in the ceded territory, the soil being equally claimed by the two states.

The course of the government of Maine, in refusing to furnish copies of the correspondence of the agent with the governor, in relation to the disputed territory, on the ground that most of the same was private and confidential, was not well calculated to insure the confidence of her sister state, and nothing was done by Massachusetts to sanction an arrangement, the terms of which they were not permitted to know.

When the subject was submitted to the senate of the United States, with the accompanying documents, that body, in January, 1832, after discussing and rejecting several propositions, by a vote of 23 to 22, advised the president to open a new negotiation for the adjustment of the boundary.*

The operation of the commercial arrangement with Great Britain, mentioned in the preceding pages, made by the administration soon after coming into power, respecting the intercourse between the United States and the British West Indies, proved less favorable to American interests than had been anticipated by its advocates. The result was, that while the interests of the navigation and colonies of England were secured, and the British government reserved the right to impose discriminating duties, with the view of encouraging importations through the northern colonies, the president, in the exercise of a power conferred upon him by Congress, repealed the laws which were imposed to counteract the partial commercial regulations of England ; and the navigation of the United States was exposed without protection, to a competition with British vessels, which were favored by heavy discriminating duties. This competition was upon too unfavorable a footing to continue, and the American shipping was soon almost totally excluded from a trade which this very arrangement was intended to secure.

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* American Annual Register.

With the exception of the disadvantages to the United States, attending the above arrangement, the foreign relations of the country were conducted with ability as well as energy, by the administration of General Jackson. In the course of the year 1831, treaties were concluded and ratified with the republic of Mexico—one relating to the boundaries between the two countries, and the other to commerce and navigation. Mr. Rives, our minister to France, also concluded a treaty between the United States and the king of the French, which was signed at Paris in July, 1831, on the subject of claims for depredations committed on American commerce, under the government of the directory, the first consul, and the emperor. Negotiations for this purpose had been long continued, by various ministers from the United States, but no satisfactory terms had been definitely settled. The French government had set up an opposing claim, on account of the non-fulfilment of a treaty made in 1778, between the United States and the king of France, for the assistance of the former to defend the West India islands of the latter, if attacked by the British. The American government contended that they were exonerated of all such demands by France, by subsequent events. The change in the French government, by the revolution of 1830, enabled Mr. Rives to bring the long-pending negotiations to a close. By this treaty the French government agreed to pay to the United States, in complete satisfaction of all claims of American citizens for depredations on their commerce, twenty-five millions of francs, or nearly five millions of dollars, in six equal annual instalments. One and a half million of francs were to be allowed by the American government to France, or French citizens, for ancient supplies, accounts, or other claims. An additional article was inserted, by which the United States engaged to reduce the duties on French wines for ten years, in consideration of which stipulation France agreed to reduce the duties on the long staple cotton of the United States to the same rate as on short staple cotton, and to abandon all claims for indemnity under the Louisiana treaty. The sum thus stipulated to be paid by France, did not amount to more than one third of the just claims of the citizens of the United States, but their liquidation, even upon terms comparatively unfavorable, was so desirable, that the conclusion of this treaty was hailed with universal satisfaction by all parties. After deliberate consideration, it was sanctioned by the senate; but the French chamber of deputies refused to make the appropriation to carry the treaty into effect, and the delay furnished occasion for an unpleasant dispute between the two countries, which was not terminated until the final settlement of the affair, in 1836.

A treaty of commerce and navigation was also negotiated at Washington, in August, 1829, between the United States and the emperor of Austria, Mr. Van Buren, secretary of state, acting on the part of the United States, and Baron de Lederer on the part of Austria. This treaty was ratified and concluded in February, 1831. The treaty with the Ottoman Porte (Turkey), already referred to, negotiated in 1830, was ratified by the president and senate in February, 1831, and articles exchanged at Constantinople in October, 1831, between Commodore David Porter, chargé d'affaires of the United States, and the Reis Effendi of the Porte. A convention between the United States and Naples, or the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, was negotiated at Naples in October, 1832, by Mr. John Nelson, chargé d'affaires on the part of the United States, and the secretary of state, prince of Cassaro, on the part of the king of Naples, by which the amount of $1,720,000 was stipulated to be paid to the United States as an indemnity for claims of our citizens for depredations on American commerce by Murat, while king of Naples, from 1809 to 1812. These claims had been considered almost hopeless; but the appearance of a considerable American naval force in the harbor of Naples, doubtless expedited the settlement.

Thus the administration of General Jackson had been eminently successful in the management of our foreign affairs, and the negotiation of numerous treaties contributed largely to sustain the popularity of the president, tending also to insure his re-election. Nor was the nation less prosperous at home than the government fortunate abroad. Abundant harvests rewarded the labor of the farmer, and imparted activity to commerce; while the rapid extension of the manufacturing interest gave employment to thousands, whose industry would have been unprofitably devoted to agriculture, and furnished a home market for the productions of the soil. The domestic policy pursued by the two preceding administrations was now beginning to produce the effects anticipated; while the prosperity of the country at the close of President Jackson's first term, it was insisted by his supporters, was owing to the policy of his administration.

The tone of the government toward foreign nations during General Jackson's administration was moderate but firm, and the honor and interest of the country were maintained in a manner indicative both of spirit and ability. Among other questions that arose during the year 1831 was one relating to the Falkland islands, which have been often the fruitful source of controversy between civilized nations, and now produced a collision between the United States and Buenos Ayres.

These islands had been leased by the government of Buenos Ayres, to a foreigner named Don Louis Vernet, who undertook to compel sealing vessels to take out licenses to take seals under his authority. Having captured three American vessels, and committed other outrages, when the news arrived in the United States, the president, always prompt to act in vindication of the rights of the nation against foreign aggression, despatched a competent force to protect our sealers in the neighborhood of Cape Horn. Captain Duncan, in the ship-of-war Lexington, had charge of the expedition. On his arrival at the Falkland islands, in December, 1831, he broke up the establishment of Vernet, restored the captured property to the owners, and transported seven of the most prominent actors to Buenos Ayres for trial. The Buenos Ayrean government affected great indignation at the manner in which the settlement had been treated, as it was under the protection of their flag, but they did not think proper to pursue the affair any further.

Chastisement equally prompt was inflicted on the Malays of Quallah Battoo, for a piratical attack on the ship Friendship, of Salem, part of the crew of which vessel they massacred, and it was deemed necessary to punish the offenders in a summary manner. Captain Downes, in the frigate Potomac, was therefore ordered to proceed to Sumatra for the purpose, and arrived at that island in February, 1832. The Malay forts, five in number, were stormed, and after a short resistance by the Malays, of whom between 80 and 100 were killed, and a large number wounded; the town was fired, and the forts destroyed. The contest lasted nearly three hours, and the American loss was 3 killed and 10 wounded.

This chastisement left a salutary impression on the minds of these piratical tribes, and the neighboring rajahs sent deputations to Captain Downes, assuring him of their friendly disposition toward the United States, and expressing their desire to obtain the friendship of the Americans.

The first presidential term of General Jackson was now drawing to a close, and parties arrayed themselves for the approaching election. We have already mentioned the meeting of the anti-masonic convention, in September, 1831, which nominated as candidate for president, William Wirt, and for vice-president, Amos Ellmaker. The national republican convention met at Baltimore in December, 1831, and nominated Henry Clay, of Kentucky, for president, and John Sergeant, of Pennsylvania, for vice-president. In May, 1832, a numerous convention of delegates of the administration party met also at Baltimore, for the purpose of nominating a candidate for vice-president, to be placed on the ticket with General Jackson, to whose nomination for re-election no dissent was manifested in the administration ranks. Martin Van Buren, of New York, was, with great unanimity, nominated for vice-president. The friends of the president insisted that he was personally dishonored by the rejection of Mr. Van Buren as minister to England; and that it was incumbent on his supporters to convince the world that he had not lost the confidence of his countrymen, by electing Mr. Van Buren to preside over the body which had declared that he was unworthy to represent the country at the British court.

This mode of reasoning prevailed, and, notwithstanding the objections of a few delegates from states where Mr. Van Buren was unpopular, he received the nomination of the administration party, for vice-president.

The friends of Mr. Calhoun were entirely alienated from the administration by this nomination, and, although the ultra state-rights and nullifying doctrines espoused by his adherents prevented them from joining the opposition in their support of Mr. Clay, it was soon understood that the president had lost their confidence, and would not receive their suffrages. The character of the contest, however, effectually precluded them from openly lending their aid to overthrow the administration. It was a contest in relation to the powers of the federal government, although, from the cautious and ambiguous manner in which the opinions of the executive were promulgated, the true nature of the question at issue was not fully understood by the people in certain portions of the Union. Even where it was so understood, no deep universal conviction prevailed that the result of this election would be decisive as to the power of the federal government. Many hoped, from the strong personal enmity manifested toward Mr. Calhoun, that the president would finally be brought to oppose doctrines, of which that gentleman was now considered the chief advocate; and the experience of a few years had furnished ample proof, that he would not be deterred from taking that step by any apprehension of a charge of inconsistency. The further development of the views of the dominant party, in South Carolina too, now began to excite great fears of a premeditated design to dissolve the Union; and it was supposed, that while on one hand the inclination toward anti-federal doctrines previously shown by the president, would prevent the disaffection from extending itself to the other southern states; on the other, that the energetic manner in which he executed his decisions would completely put down the dangerous heresy of nullification, and in the end strengthen the general government.

The apprehension that the re-election of General Jackson would tend to unsettle the government, consequently did not operate upon the mass of the voters to the same extent as upon the leaders of the opposition.

They were governed by the more obvious considerations growing out of the pressing question of nullification on the part of South Carolina; and as he had declared himself opposed to the pretensions of that state, the distant dangers to be apprehended from the effect of the principles advocated by the president in the Georgia controversy were by many disregarded. Even among the mass of those who professed to be governed by a desire to preserve the constitution from destruction, there was a want of that untiring energy and self-devotion which flow from a deep conviction of the importance of a cause. An unwillingness to postpone plans of personal advancement, or to sacrifice individual prejudices and private views to the good of the cause, too much characterized the opposition to the administration. Its members, professing great independence of character, were too apt to forget, that when combined effort is required, individual will must give way, and the plans of the party were constantly thwarted by the refusal of its members to unite upon a single candidate.*

The anti-masons professed an equal dislike with the national republicans to the principles and policy of the administration, and both parties declared themselves ready to combine to defeat the election of General Jackson. Neither, however, were willing to yield to what they called the dictation of the other.

Anti-masonic electoral tickets were formed in the states of Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The national republicans adopted the anti-masonic tickets in New York and Pennsylvania, but in the other states named, and the remaining states of the Union, with the exception of three or four southern states, tickets were nominated favorable to Mr. Clay for the presidency. In Ohio the anti-masonic ticket for electors first nominated was withdrawn, and the contest in that state was between Jackson and Clay.

While the two divisions of the opposition were prevented from coalescing, by what they regarded as insuperable obstacles, excepting the imperfect union effected in the three states named, the friends of the administration united in its support with a zeal and earnestness which both deserved and insured success. Local divisions were done away; personal difficulties adjusted, and private quarrels forgotten, in the general desire to promote the triumph of the party. The people at large, witnessing on one side so much party devotion, and on the other so much of the opposite quality, were led to regard the cause of the administration with more favor than it would have obtained upon a mere view of its principles and policy.

Although the elections for state officers in some of the states, in the autumn of 1832, were either favorable to the opposition, or, from the small majorities given in favor of the administration, they indicated a close contest at the approaching presidential election, the result of the latter was a complete triumph of the electoral tickets pledged to Jackson and Van Buren.

The great military services of General Jackson had gained for him general popularity, and many who did not altogether approve of his measures, attributed his errors to mistaken views. His honesty of purpose was questioned by comparatively few, and all admired the boldness and firmness with which he pursued those measures that had been adopted and avowed as the policy of his administration.

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* American Annual Register

He was styled, too, the representative of the democratic party, and the people were constantly assured that his sole object was to deprive the federal government only of those powers which it had usurped, and to bring it within the limits prescribed by the constitution.*

In the electoral colleges the votes for president stood as follows: Andrew Jackson 219, Henry Clay 49, John Floyd 11, William Wirt 7. For vice-president—Martin Van Buren 189, John Sergeant 49, William Wilkins 30, Henry Lee 11, Amos Ellmaker 7. The votes for John Floyd and Henry Lee were given by the state of South Carolina. Pennsylvania refused to vote for Mr. Van Buren; therefore Mr. Wilkins, one of the United States senators from that state, received the vote of the electors for vice-president.

Comparing this election with that of 1828, it will be observed, that General Jackson gained the votes of Maine (except one vote), New Hampshire, New Jersey, and part of New York, which were then given to Mr. Adams, while he now lost the votes of Kentucky and South Carolina, which he had received in 1828. The majority in the electoral colleges was not, however, a fair test of the measure of approbation bestowed upon his administration. Many of the states were carried by small majorities, and although the electoral votes were more than three to one in his favor, the aggregate popular vote cast for him was less than he obtained in 1828. In several of the states the proportion of the people who declined voting at the election of 1832, was sufficient to have changed the result, and the probability was strong, that if the opposition had been united on Judge M'Lean, he would have been elected.

The large majority received by General Jackson in the electoral colleges, however, was by him, and his supporters generally, construed into an unqualified approval by his countrymen of all his measures. Upon all points where his course had been questioned by his opponents, his re-election was urged as the final decision of the people, from which there was no appeal.

The second session of the twenty-second Congress commenced on the 4th of December, 1832, and continued until the expiration of their term, on the 3d of March, 1833. The president *pro tem.* of the senate, Mr. Tazewell, having resigned, the Hon. Hugh L. White, of Tennessee, was elected in his place. On the 28th of December, the vice-president of the United States, Hon. John C. Calhoun, resigned that office, and was elected a senator from South Carolina, in place of Mr. Hayne, who had been chosen governor of the state.

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* American Annual Register.

The secretary of the treasury, Mr. M'Lane, in his report to Congress, urged upon that body a reduction of duty to the revenue standard, and declared that "there was not the same necessity for high protecting duties as that which was consulted in our past legislation."

It was now distinctly foreseen that the final contest relating to a protecting tariff was about be decided. Upon distributing the various subjects recommended to the consideration of Congress, this was referred in the house, to the committee of ways and means, of which Mr. Verplanck, of New York, was chairman.

Notwithstanding a new tariff had been adopted at the last session, after a lengthened discussion, and by large majorities, it was now determined to remodel the whole, to conciliate its opponents at the south, and on the 27th of December, a bill was reported by the committee of ways and means, which was understood to embody the views of the administration.

In the senate, also, the subject was taken up at an early period, and on the 13th of December, the chairman of the committee of finance presented a resolution calling on the secretary of the treasury for the plan and details of a bill in conformity with his suggestions. After some debate as to the propriety of calling on a branch of the executive department for an opinion, instead of facts or information, the resolution was adopted.

The bill reported in the house by Mr. Verplanck, proposed a diminution on all the protected articles, to take effect immediately, and a further diminution on the 2d of March, 1834. By this bill, a great and immediate reduction was contemplated upon the chief manufactures of the country, and a further reduction to the revenue standard in 1834. This would afford to the domestic manufacturer a protecting duty from 15 to 20 per cent., and with this advantage, the opponents of high duties argued that he should be content. On the other side, it was contended that the diminution was too great, and that by suddenly bringing the duties down to the minimum point, the government would violate its faith with those who had been induced to embark in manufacturing, by the adoption of what was declared to be the settled policy of the country, and who would be ruined by a sudden and unexpected withdrawal of the protection they enjoyed.

The bill of last session which was framed with the view of settling the question, had not yet been fairly tested, and it was insisted that such a vacillating course on the part of the government, was positive injustice to those who had vested their capital under the existing laws.*

While the discussion on the bill was going on, new interest was imparted to the subject by a message from the president to Congress, on the 16th of January, communicating the South Carolina ordinance and nullifying laws, together with his own views as to what should be done under the existing state of affairs. Upon the message being read in the senate, Mr. Calhoun repelled, in the most earnest manner, the imputation of any hostile feeling or intentions against the Union, on the part of South Carolina. The state authorities, he asserted, had looked only to a judicial decision upon the question, until the concentration of the United States troops at Charleston and Augusta had compelled them to make provision to defend themselves.

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* American Annual Register

The judiciary committee, to whom the message was referred, reported a bill to enforce the collection of the revenue where any obstructions were offered to the officers employed in that duty. It vested full power in the president to employ the land and naval forces of the United States, if necessary, to carry the revenue laws into effect.

After the bill was reported to the senate, Mr. Calhoun offered a series of resolutions, embodying his views and those who sustained the doctrines of nullification, with regard to the powers of the general government and the rights of the states. Mr. Grundy, of Tennessee, offered other resolutions as substitutes for Mr. Calhoun's, and which set forth the views of the administration. The latter were not deemed, by a portion of the senate, fully to set forth the character of the government, inasmuch as while they declare the several acts of Congress laying duties on imports to be constitutional, and deny the power of a single state to annul them *or any other constitutional law*, tacitly yield the whole doctrine of nullification, by the implied admission that any unconstitutional law may be judged of by the state in the last resort, and annulled by the same authority. With the view of having placed upon record his opinions upon that point, Mr. Clayton, of Delaware, an opposition senator, proposed a resolution, setting them forth, and declaring that "the senate will not fail, in the faithful discharge of its most solemn duty, to support the executive in the just administration of the government, and clothe it with all constitutional power necessary to the faithful execution of the laws and the preservation of the Union."

The whole subject was now before Congress; and the state legislatures, being generally in session, passed resolutions expressing their opinions as to the course which that body ought to adopt.

In the legislatures of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Delaware, Tennessee, Indiana, and Missouri, the doctrines of nullification were entirely disclaimed, as destructive to the constitution. Those of North Carolina and Alabama were no less explicit in condemning nullification, but they also expressed an opinion that the tariff was unconstitutional and inexpedient.

The state of Georgia also reprobated the doctrine of nullification, as unconstitutional, by a vote of 102 to 51 in her legislature; but it denounced the tariff in decided terms, and proposed a convention of the states of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi, to devise measures to obtain relief from that system.

The legislature of Virginia assumed a more extraordinary ground. The subject was referred to a committee on federal relations, and a general discussion was had on the powers of the government: and finally resolutions were passed, earnestly requesting South Carolina not to proceed further under the ordinance of their convention to reduce the import duties to a revenue standard, and declaring that the people of Virginia expect that the general government and the government of South Carolina will carefully abstain from all acts calculated to disturb the tranquillity of the country.

After further resolving that they adhere to the principles of the Virginia resolutions of 1798, but that they do not consider them as sanctioning the proceedings of South Carolina, or the president's proclamation, they proceeded to appoint Benjamin W. Leigh, as a commissioner on the part of the state, to proceed to South Carolina, to communicate the resolutions of Virginia, and to express their good-will to the people of that state, and their anxious solicitude for an accommodation between them and the general government.

The state of New Hampshire expressed no opinion as to the doctrines of South Carolina, but the legislature passed resolutions in favor of reducing the tariff to the revenue standard.

On the other hand, the legislatures of Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, declared themselves to be opposed to any modification of the tariff.

While the states were thus sustaining their respective views and interests, Congress was slowly proceeding in the discussion of the questions belonging to the subject. In the house, the bill for reducing the tariff was subjected to an ordeal that threatened to prove fatal to its passage through that body. The discussion upon its general principles occupied the house for two weeks after its introduction, and was resumed from time to time, during the examination of its details, for the purpose of amendment; and but little prospect appeared of bringing about any satisfactory termination of this long-disputed question.*

The authorities of South Carolina, in the meantime, exerted themselves to increase the military force of the state. Munitions were provided, depôts formed, and the militia in the nullifying districts were called upon to volunteer in her defence. On the other hand, the minority of the people, who called themselves the union party, were equally determined not to submit to the nullifying ordinance and laws, and prepared themselves with equal firmness and zeal to sustain the federal authorities. A spark was sufficient to kindle the flame of civil war, but fortunately no accident occurred to bring about a collision. The revenue laws, under the protection of the forces of the general government, were carried into effect without any opposition by violence. No attempt was made to enforce the laws under the ordinance of the state convention, and on the 31st of January, at a meeting of the leading nullifiers at Charleston, after reiterating their determination to maintain their principles, and expressing their satisfaction at the proposition to modify the tariff, it was resolved that during the session of Congress, all collision be avoided between the state and federal authorities, in the hope that the controversy might be satisfactorily adjusted.

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* American Annual Register.

During these proceedings in South Carolina, the enforcing bill, providing for the collection of duties, was pressed forward to a vote. It was, however, delayed in the senate, by a lengthened discussion, until the 20th of February, when it passed that body by a vote of 32 ayes; Mr. Tyler, only, voting in the negative, the opponents of the bill generally having withdrawn. It also passed the house on the 28th of February, 150 to 35, and became a law.

The tariff bill reported by Mr. Verplanck, and sustained by the friends of the administration, in the house of representatives, was delayed in that body until the 12th of February; when Mr. Clay, of the senate, apprehending either the passage of that bill, which he considered would be destructive to the manufacturing interests, or that Congress would adjourn, leaving the matter unsettled, and the country in danger of a civil war, introduced, pursuant to notice, a measure of compromise in the senate. This was a bill which had been prepared, after much consultation, for the permanent adjustment of the tariff. It provided, that where the duties exceeded 20 per cent., there should be one tenth part of the excess deducted after December 30, 1833, and one tenth each alternate year, until the 31st of December, 1841, when one half of the residue was to be deducted, and after the 30th of June, 1842, the duties on all goods were to be reduced to twenty per cent. on a home valuation, and were to be paid in cash.

After Mr. Clay had stated that his views in introducing the bill were to preserve the protective tariff for a length of time, and to restore good feelings and tranquillity among the people, he explained the proposed measure and its probable operation. Mr. Calhoun expressed his approbation of the bill; and it was discussed by various senators until the 23d of February, when it was ordered to a third reading. On the 25th, Mr. Clay stated that a bill identical in its provisions to the one before the senate, had just passed the house, and would probably be presented the next day to the senate for approval. The senate, on his motion, therefore adjourned.

In the house of representatives, Mr. Verplanck's bill was taken up for discussion, when, on motion of Mr. Letcher, of Kentucky, it was recommitted, with instructions to report Mr. Clay's bill. The bill being referred to the committee, the substitute was agreed to, forthwith reported to the house, and the following day passed, by a vote of 119 to 85. In the senate, after some further discussion, it passed, ayes 29, noes 16, and received the signature of the president on the 2d of March, 1833.

The passage of this bill was regarded by all as a concession to South Carolina, and many considered it as sanctioning the ultimate triumph of the principles advanced by that state.

The supporters of the bill who were friendly to the system of protection insisted, on the contrary, that this was the only mode of preventing an entire and immediate destruction of the manufacturing interests. That the administration had a decided majority in the next Congress; and if the question was not settled now, the manufacturers would be entirely at the mercy of their enemies.

Those who looked to the ultimate results of this compromise, preferred to test, rather than to surrender, the powers of the government, and they strongly reprobated the idea of abandoning the policy of the government upon the demand of a single state.

The leaders of the nullifying party, on their part, affected to regard the compromise as an unqualified triumph. The convention of South Carolina assembled at Columbia, at the call of the governor, on the 11th of March, and, deeming it expedient to consider the compromise tariff as satisfactory, they repealed the ordinance nullifying the revenue laws, and nullified the enforcing law. After this the tariff controversy in South Carolina ended.

The bill providing for the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands among the states, was again introduced by Mr. Clay, at an early period of this session. After much discussion, it passed that body on the 25th of January, ayes 24, noes 20. It was not taken up in the house until the 1st of March, when, after being amended, it was passed, ayes 96, nays 40, and sent back to the senate. The amendment of the house was concurred in by the senate, 23 to 5. These votes indicated that two thirds of both houses were in favor of the policy proposed to be established by Mr. Clay's bill; and if the president had returned the bill with his objections, it was understood that it would have become a law, notwithstanding the veto.

This opportunity, however, was not given to them, as the president retained the bill until after the adjournment, which took place at the termination of their constitutional term on the 3d of March, and thus prevented Congress from expressing its opinion upon his objections. The bill was thus defeated by the executive, who in this manner assumed an absolute instead of a qualified veto upon the acts of Congress, which was confided to him by the constitution.* The reason of the president for his course in this matter, as given to the next Congress, was want of time for a due consideration of this important measure.

Among the subjects recommended by the president in his annual message in December, 1832, was the propriety of removing the public moneys from the United States bank. The secretary of the treasury, who had hitherto advocated the recharter of the bank, followed up the president's recommendation by the expression of his doubts as to their safety, if continued in its custody. An agent appointed by the treasury to investigate the actual condition of the bank, shortly after made his report, and it appeared that this institution had an excess of funds of more than seven millions of dollars over its liabilities, besides its capital of $35,000,000.

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* American Annual Register.

The president also recommended a sale of the stock of the bank belonging to the United States. A proposition to that effect, reported by Mr. Polk from the committee of ways and means in the house, was rejected on the first reading, 102 to 91.

The subject of the public deposites was referred to the same committee, who, through Mr. Verplanck, made a report stating the situation of the bank. They consequently recommended a resolution, that the government deposites may, in the opinion of the house, be safely continued in the bank of the United States. This resolution was adopted by the house —ayes 109, noes 46.

Appropriations were made at this session of Congress, for carrying on certain works before commenced, and the improvement of harbors and rivers, also for the Cumberland road, and certain territorial roads. Acts were also passed for improving the navigation of certain rivers in Florida and Michigan; making provision for publishing the documentary history of the American revolution; and sundry other laws of less general interest.

At the close of the first term of President Jackson, the foreign relations of the United States, with the exception of France, were in a favorable position. The first instalment of the indemnity to be paid by the treaty with France, was drawn for, in a bill of exchange by the American government, but the French chambers had not made any appropriation to meet it, and the bill was not accepted. This neglect was warmly resented by the president. Instructions were given to the American minister to urge upon the French government a prompt compliance with the treaty.

With Russia a treaty of commerce was concluded in December, 1832, upon the principles of reciprocity. A similar treaty was made with Belgium. Some claims of American merchants against Portugal, for illegal captures, were prosecuted to a successful result, and an effort was made by the administration to procure satisfaction from Spain, for illegal detentions and captures of American property, subsequent to the treaty of 1819, and an acknowledgment of their justice was finally extorted from that government. A treaty of commerce was concluded with Chili.

The second presidential term of General Jackson commenced on the 4th of March, 1833. At twelve o'clock on that day, the president and vice-president elect, attended by the heads of departments, foreign ministers and their suites, judges of the supreme court, senators, and members of the house of representatives, the mayor and citizens of Washington, and strangers, entered the hall of representatives. The president took the seat of the speaker of the house, with the vice-president, Mr. Van Buren, on his left, and his private secretary, Mr. Donelson, on his right. After a pause of a few minutes, the president rose, and was greeted by the cheers of the large assembly present. He then proceeded, in an audible and firm voice, to pronounce his inaugural address, at the close of which he was again greeted with cheers and applause. The chief justice then administered the usual oath to the president. The oath was also administered to Mr. Van Buren, after which the president and vice-president retired, amid the plaudits of the assembly.

The excitement of the political contest was at an end; nullification was virtually relinquished by South Carolina; and the modification of the tariff had tranquillized the public mind. The angry feelings engendered by the election had subsided; and in a tour which the president made through the middle and eastern states, in the summer of 1833, both parties united to do honor to the chief magistrate of the republic; his opponents heartily approving of his course toward South Carolina, and of the principles avowed by him in his proclamation and message, and his supporters giving vent to those feelings which had originally enlisted them, as a party, in his favor.

A political calm had succeeded the tempest, and it seemed as if the second term of General Jackson's administration was about to prove as quiet and tranquil, as the first had been stormy and turbulent. This expectation was not destined to be realized. A new subject of excitement was at this time introduced into our politics, which continued to agitate the public mind for a large portion of the remaining period of General Jackson's administration, affecting, as it did, the interests of the community generally. We allude to the removal of the government deposites from the bank of the United States, by order of the president.

By the law of 1816, creating the bank of the United States, the public moneys were required to be deposited in the vaults of the bank and its branches, and, as an equivalent for that deposite, the bank assumed the responsibility of acting as the fiscal agent of the government.

In the same act, however, it was provided that the public deposites might be removed by the secretary of the treasury; but requiring him to lay his reasons for removing them immediately before Congress.

After the veto of the bill to recharter the bank, the president soon determined that that institution should be deprived of the public deposites, although the charter did not expire until 1836. We have already seen that Congress, in 1833, refused, by a decisive vote, to authorize the removal of the deposites, as recommended by the president, and new means were adopted to effect the contemplated end.

The secretary of state, Edward Livingston, being at this time appointed minister to France, on account of the state of our relations with that power, Louis M'Lane, secretary of the treasury, who had declined to sanction the removal of the deposites from the United States bank, was transferred to the state department, and William J. Duane, of Pennsylvania, was appointed his successor. It was soon, however, found, that Mr. Duane was not willing to act in that matter, without sufficient reasons to sustain him before the world.

The president had urged Mr. Duane, during his northern tour in the summer of 1833, to remove the public moneys from the obnoxious institution, without convincing him of the propriety of the step. He finally obtained from him his consent to appoint Amos Kendall, as an agent, to inquire into the terms upon which the local banks, incorporated by the several states, would take the public deposites, upon the basis of mutual guarantee. This basis, however, was found to be inadmissible. The banks refused to guaranty for each other, and the secretary was soon made to understand that it was the president's determination to remove the deposites at all hazards.

To this he explicitly refused to lend himself. He even refused to fix a day after the adjournment of Congress, for their removal, in case that body did not act upon the subject. The most he would agree to was, to remove them in case Congress ordered him so to do.

In this dilemma, the president convoked the cabinet on the 10th of September, 1833, and laid before its members an exposition of his views upon this important question. The doctrines advanced in this document were, that the power of the secretary to remove the deposites was unqualified, and not limited to particular contingencies; that the speedy termination of the charter of the bank rendered it incumbent on the secretary to introduce a plan for keeping and disbursing the public revenue, before its dissolution, to avoid any derangement consequent upon such a change at that moment; that the conduct of the bank in relation to the redemption of the three per cent. stocks, and the bill on the French government; and its interference with politics, deserved punishment; and under those circumstances, the president assumed the responsibility himself, of removing the public deposites from the United States bank, and fixed upon the 1st of October, 1833, as the day for their removal.

The secretary of the treasury deliberated upon the question thus authoritatively pressed upon him, and on the 21st of September he announced to the president his determination not to carry his directions into effect. He also resolved not to resign; and as he was the only officer who could give a legal order for the removal of the public moneys, the president was compelled, in order to carry his designs into effect, to remove the secretary This was done on the 23d of September, and Roger B. Taney (then attorney-general) appointed in his place. Benjamin F. Butler, of New York, was appointed attorney-general in place of Mr. Taney.

The new secretary was known to entertain similar opinions to those of the president, both as to the right and expediency of removing the deposites, and he immediately issued the necessary orders for their removal to the local banks selected by him as agents of the government.

Almost simultaneously with this step, an attempt was made to destroy the credit of the bank, by suddenly presenting for payment, at one of the distant branches, a large amount of their circulating notes, which had been secretly accumulated. This demand was promptly met; but, connected with the withdrawal of the public deposites, it evinced a settled hostility against the bank, and compelled the directors to adopt a general system of retrenchment, with a view to its own safety.

Great commercial distress immediately ensued. The amount of the loans of the bank, on the 1st of October, 1833, was over sixty millions of dollars; and the amount of deposites of the United States government at that time in the bank, was $9,868,435, all of which amount was removed during a period of about nine months, and the greater part of the same during the first four months. At the moment of taking this step, the business of the country was unusually active. The capitalist and the merchant, mechanics and manufacturers, had unlimited confidence in each other, and all the moneyed institutions of the country had extended their loans to the utmost bounds of their ability.

At such a juncture, great and rigid retrenchment, attended with want of confidence, was necessarily productive of ruinous consequences. Private credit was deeply affected, and the business of the country was interrupted to a degree that could be attributable only to the panic which followed this violent attack upon the pecuniary concerns of the community.*

The twenty-third Congress held its first session from December 2, 1833, to June 30, 1834. There was a decided administration majority in the house of representatives. Andrew Stevenson was again elected speaker, receiving 142 votes, against 66 for all others, and 9 blanks. In the senate the new vice-president, Mr. Van Buren, took his seat, as presiding officer, but in that body the administration were in the minority, in consequence of Mr. Calhoun and other state-rights senators acting with the opposition.

The principal topic of discussion at this session of Congress was the removal of the deposites, by order of the president, from the bank of the United States. The subject was brought before the two houses by the president's message and the report from the secretary of the treasury. On the 26th of December, 1833, Mr. Clay offered the following resolution, in the senate, which gave rise to long and animated debates, and was finally adopted on the 28th March, 1834, ayes 26, noes 20: "*Resolved*, That the president, in the late executive proceedings in relation to the public revenue, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and laws, but in derogation of both." Against this resolution the president sent in his protest to the senate, containing an elaborate argument on the subject, in which he denied the right of the senate to censure him in this way, and demanded that this remonstrance should be placed on their records. This the senate refused.

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* American Annual Register.

The senate, on the 4th of June, also adopted two joint resolutions offered by Mr. Clay, declaring, 1st, that the reasons of the secretary of the treasury were unsatisfactory and insufficient; 2d, requiring the deposite of the public moneys to be made in the bank of the United States. The first of these resolutions was adopted, 29 to 16; the second, 28 to 16. In the house of representatives they were laid on the table—ayes 114, noes 101.

The removal of the deposites caused intense excitement and much commercial distress throughout the Union. Numerous committees, appointed by merchants, mechanics, tradesmen, and others, in the principal cities and towns, waited on the president, asking that he would recommend some measure of relief. To these he replied, in substance, "that the government could give no relief, and provide no remedy; that the banks were the occasion of all the evils which existed, and that those who suffered by their great enterprise, had none to blame but themselves; that those who traded on borrowed capital ought to break." Petitions for the restoration of the deposites, or some other measure of relief, were poured into Congress during the whole session; they were favorably received in the senate, but as the house of representatives sustained the president, petitions to counteract his views met with but little favor in that body.

Resolutions reported by the committee of ways and means in the house, were adopted on the 4th of April; 1st, that the bank of the United States ought not to be rechartered—ayes 132, noes 82; 2d, that the public deposites ought not to be restored to the bank of the United States—ayes 118, noes 103.

On the 2d of June, the speaker of the house, Mr. Stevenson, having been nominated by the president minister to Great Britain, resigned his situation as speaker; and the house proceeded to ballot for a speaker in his place. John Bell, of Tennessee, was elected, on the tenth ballot, receiving 114 votes, to 78 for James K. Polk, and 26 scattering and blanks. Mr. Polk was the administration candidate, and Mr. Bell was elected by the votes of the opposition and a portion of the administration party who were opposed to Mr. Van Buren as successor to General Jackson.

On the 23d of June the senate rejected the nomination of Mr. Taney as secretary of the treasury, 28 to 18; and on the 24th Andrew Stevenson was rejected as minister to England, 23 to 22. The ground taken on the rejection of Mr. Stevenson was, that he had received the offer of the mission to Great Britain in a letter from the secretary of state, by order of the president, in March, 1833, after which he had been elected to Congress and made speaker of the house, the committees of which he had appointed in conformity with the views of the president. Being called on by the senate for a copy of the letter to Mr. Stevenson offering him the mission, the president communicated the same, although denying their right to ask for it, and informed the senate that the contingency on which Mr. Stevenson was to be appointed did not arise, but the negotiation expected was commenced at Washington instead of London. The mission to England continued vacant for several years after the rejection of Mr. Van Buren, in 1832, and the affairs of the United States with that kingdom were, during the period, intrusted to Aaron Vail, who had been secretary of legation under Mr. Van Buren. The president declined nominating any other person as minister, until Mr. Stevenson was named, and after he was rejected, the place still continued vacant until March, 1836, when Mr. Stevenson was again nominated, and then confirmed by the senate. Strong objections were raised in the senate in 1834, against the frequent appointments of members of Congress to office by General Jackson. During the first five years of his administration he had appointed to office thirteen senators and twenty-five representatives. In June, 1834, Mr. M'Lane having resigned, John Forsyth, of Georgia, was appointed secretary of state, Mahlon Dickerson, of New Jersey, secretary of the navy, in place of Levi Woodbury, appointed secretary of the treasury.

An important act respecting the coinage of the United States was passed at this session. By this law the weight of the gold eagle of the United States was reduced twelve grains, being equal to 66½ cents less in value than the old coin of that denomination. Two other acts were passed, regulating the value of certain foreign gold and silver coins. The object of these several acts was to infuse a larger proportion of gold and silver into the currency of the United States than had been used; and this became a favorite project of the president and his supporters in the cabinet and in Congress. Increased activity was given to the mint, and the display of the new gold coin among the people had an important bearing on the elections in the different states, and operated favorably to the administration.

Among the other acts passed at this long and arduous session, those of most general interest were as follows: making appropriations for certain harbors and rivers; for completing a road from Memphis to Little Rock, in Arkansas; authorizing certain roads in Arkansas; aiding roads in Michigan; continuing the Cumberland road; appropriations for lighthouses; for improvement of the Hudson river; authorizing the purchase of the papers and books of General Washington.

The course of the president with regard to the bank of the United States, although it was popular with the mass of the people in some sections of the country, caused a considerable diminution of the strength of the administration in the commercial states, as evinced by the elections in

1834. Many of those who had supported General Jackson, now joined the opposition, the combined forces of the party opposing the administration now assuming the name of "whigs," and thus applied, the term was first adopted in the state of New York. The friends of the administration adhered to the party name of "democrats."

The twenty-third Congress held its second session from December 1, 1834, to March 3, 1835. George Poindexter, of Mississippi, had been chosen president *pro tem.* of the senate, at the close of the last session, but as the vice-president, Mr. Van Buren, was constantly in his seat as presiding officer, President Jackson was saved from the mortification of seeing at the head of the senate one to whom he was personally inimical; a quarrel having occurred between the president and the senator from Mississippi.

But few acts of general interest were passed at this short session. Appropriations were made for roads and surveys, also for certain harbors and rivers; and, as usual, for the Cumberland road. Branches of the mint were established at the gold mines in North Carolina and Georgia; also at New Orleans. In conformity with the recommendation of the president, an act was passed regulating the government deposites in the state banks. At the close of the session, John Tyler, of Virginia, was elected president *pro tem.* of the senate. He had generally acted with the opposition after the removal of the deposites from the United States bank, by President Jackson.

There was an impression at this time, that General Jackson contemplated retiring from the presidency, leaving the reins of government in the hands of Mr. Van Buren for the remainder of his term; but if he had such an intention it was abandoned. He was, however, anxious that Mr. Van Buren should be his successor in the presidency, and in February, 1835, he came out with a letter to a friend, in which he expresses himself in favor of a national democratic convention, to nominate a president and vice-president. The convention was a favorite project of Mr. Van Buren, and it soon appeared that all the supporters of the administration who were in favor of Mr. Van Buren as successor to General Jackson, advocated a nomination by a convention, while the opponents of Mr. Van Buren, in the same ranks, denounced that mode of nomination. A large section of the Jackson party gave early indications of an intention to support Hugh L. White, one of the Tennessee senators, for president, and in January, 1835, he was nominated by the legislature of Alabama, and, about the same time, by the people of Tennessee, and by the Tennessee delegation in the house of representatives, all of whom signed a letter in his favor, except James K. Polk and Cave Johnson. Mr. Van Buren was already nominated for the presidency by a state convention in Mississippi. Three candidates had been named by the whig opposition, namely, General William H. Harrison, of Ohio, by a meeting at Harrisburg; John

M'Lean, of Ohio, by a legislative caucus in that state; and Daniel Webster, by the whigs in the legislature of Massachusetts.

The national democratic convention for the nomination of president and vice-president of the United States, met at Baltimore on the 20th of May, 1835. More than six hundred delegates were in attendance, and twenty-two states were represented. Upon the first ballot, Martin Van Buren received the unanimous vote of the convention for president. This was expected, as none but the friends of Mr. Van Buren took part in the convention. Colonel Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, received the nomination for vice-president, by 178 votes, to 87 for William C. Rives, of Virginia. The delegates from Virginia protested against the nomination of Colonel Johnson, declaring that he could not receive the vote of that state.

William T. Barry being appointed minister to Spain, Amos Kendall was appointed postmaster-general in his place, in May, 1835.

The payment of the first instalment of the French indemnity being still refused by the French chambers, the president instructed Mr. Livingston, minister to that court, to return to the United States. He accordingly asked for his passports, and arrived home in June, 1835. The affairs between the United States and France now wore a threatening aspect, but the matter in dispute was finally settled, through the intervention of the British government, in 1836.

The twenty-fourth Congress assembled on the 7th of December, 1835, and the first session continued until the 4th of July, 1836. James K. Polk, of Tennessee, was elected speaker of the house of representatives, having received 132 votes, against 84 for John Bell, the late speaker, and 9 scattering and blank votes. Mr. Polk was the administration candidate, and Mr. Bell was supported by the opposition, including the friends of Judge White for the presidency.

The statements in the message of the president at the opening of this session, indicated a high state of public prosperity, so far as the national treasury was concerned. The public debt had then been extinguished, and there was a large surplus remaining in the treasury. The country had at this time somewhat recovered from the panic and shock affecting public and private credit, occasioned by the removal of the deposites, and concomitant circumstances.

Mr. Clay again introduced a bill to provide for the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands among the states, which passed the senate by a vote of 25 to 20, but was not acted on by the house of representatives.

The most important act of the session was the distribution act, or a bill to regulate the deposites of the public money, which was passed in June, 1836; it provided that the money which should be in the treasury on the 1st day of January, 1837, reserving the sum of five millions of dollars, should be deposited with the several states, in proportion to their respective representation in Congress, which should by law authorize their treasurer or other competent authorities to receive the same. The deposites to be made with the states in quarterly amounts, commencing on the 1st of January, 1837.

The bill to distribute the proceeds of the public lands, as proposed by Mr. Clay, having failed, and there being a large surplus in the treasury, the bill just mentioned, for the distribution of the surplus revenue, was devised, to effect temporarily the same purpose; and to obviate the scruples of the president, the law provided for a deposite with the states without interest, instead of a positive transfer or quit-claim from the general government to the states. The law, however, received the support of more than two thirds of each house.* The amount thus divided among the states, with no expectation of being again recalled (and that can not be done till directed by Congress), was over twenty-eight millions of dollars. The balance of the public debt was paid off in 1835, and the amount of revenue from customs and sales of the public lands, in that and the succeeding year, had swollen the surplus in the treasury, in 1836, to more than forty millions of dollars. Owing to the subsequent pecuniary difficulties of the government, in 1837, Congress suspended the fourth instalment to be deposited with the states.

A new law respecting patents was also enacted at this session, and all former general laws on this subject were repealed. The state of Michigan was admitted into the Union, on certain conditions; but those conditions were not complied with until the following year, when the state was formally admitted. The state of Arkansas was also admitted into the Union. Among other important acts of the session, those of most general interest were those making appropriations for the improvement of certain harbors and rivers, and for continuing the Cumberland road. At the close of the session, William R. King, of Alabama, an administration senator, was elected president *pro tem.* of the senate. At the commencement of the session there was an opposition majority in the senate; but several changes had taken place, and the administration now claimed a majority in both branches of Congress.

A bill was passed by Congress fixing the day of meeting and adjournment, which was vetoed by the president, in the following message to the senate, on the 9th of June:—

"*To the Senate of the United States:—*

"The act of Congress 'to appoint a day for the annual meeting of Congress,' which originated in the senate, has not received my signature. The power of Congress to fix, by law, a day for the regular annual meeting of Congress is undoubted; but the concluding part of this act, which is intended to fix the adjournment of every succeeding Congress to the second Monday in May, after the commencement of the first session, does not appear to me in accordance with the provisions of the constitution of the United States.

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* It passed the senate, ayes 39, noes 6—house, ayes 155 noes 38.

"The constitution provides :—

"1st article, 5th section : That 'neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.'

"1st article, 7th section : That 'every order, resolution, or vote, to which the concurrence of the senate and house of representatives may be necessary (except on the question of adjournment), shall be presented to the president of the United States, and, before the same shall take effect, shall be approved of by him,' &c.

"2d article, 3d section : That 'he [the president] may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses of Congress, or either of them ; and, in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such times as he thinks proper,' &c.

"According to these provisions, the day of the adjournment of Congress is not the subject of legislative enactment. Except in the event of disagreement between the senate and house of representatives, the president has no right to meddle with the question, and, in that event, his power is exclusive, but confined to fixing the adjournment of the Congress whose branches have disagreed. The question of adjournment is obviously to be decided by each Congress for itself, by the separate action of each house for the time being, and is one of those subjects upon which the framers of that instrument did not intend one Congress should act, with or without the executive aid, for its successors. As a substitute for the present rule, which requires the two houses by consent to fix the day of adjournment, and, in the event of disagreement, the president to decide, it is proposed to fix the day by law, to be binding in all future time, unless changed by consent of both houses of Congress, and to take away the contingent power of the executive, which, in anticipated cases of disagreement, is vested in him. This substitute is to apply, not to the present Congress and executive, but to our successors. Considering, therefore, that this subject exclusively belongs to the two houses of Congress, whose day of adjournment is to be fixed, and that each has at that time the right to maintain and insist upon its own opinion, and to require the president to decide in the event of disagreement with the other, I am constrained to deny my sanction to the act herewith respectfully returned to the senate. I do so with greater reluctance, as, apart from this constitutional difficulty, the other provisions of it do not appear to me objectionable."

After the adjournment of Congress, the public mind was much agitated by the promulgation of an executive order from the treasury department, called "the specie circular." During the session, Mr. Benton, of Missouri, had offered a resolution in the senate, on the 22d of April, declaring that nothing ought to be received but gold and silver in payment for the public lands, and that the committee on the public lands be instructed to report a bill accordingly. This resolution was not acted upon in the senate ; but soon after Congress had adjourned, a circular was issued by Mr. Woodbury, secretary of the treasury, dated the 11th of July, 1836 (by order of the president), directing the receivers of the public moneys to receive, in payment of the public lands, nothing but gold and silver (and Virginia land scrip in certain cases). As the sales of the public lands had been very large for two or three years, and many of the purchases had been made on speculation, through the facilities afforded by the state banks, the operation of this specie circular from the treasury department, proved very disastrous in its effects upon the business community.

When it was ascertained that the bank of the United States would not be rechartered as a national institution, numerous banks were incorporated by the several state legislatures, to supply the supposed want of banking capital. The bank of the United States was chartered by the legislature of Pennsylvania, in 1836, with the same amount of capital as the national institution (the charter of which expired the same year), viz., thirty-five millions of dollars. The panic occasioned by the removal of the deposites having subsided, and the state banks being without the check of a national regulator to prevent excessive issues of paper circulation, the facilities of bank accommodations occasioned a scene of speculation which extended far and wide, over the whole Union, and all classes of citizens were more or less entangled in the operations which ensued. Extensive purchases of the public lands, by individuals and companies, were among the schemes of the day, for the employment of the abundance of bank paper.

The immediate effect of the treasury circular, requiring specie to be paid for purchases of the public lands, was to divert the flow of specie from the legitimate channels of commerce, and otherwise to derange the currency, thus embarrassing the operations of the business community. So far as the circular tended to check the tide of speculation, particularly in the public lands, its operation was deemed salutary.

In March, 1836, the senate confirmed the nomination of Roger B. Taney as chief justice of the supreme court, in place of John Marshall, deceased ; also Philip P. Barbour, to fill a vacancy on the same bench ; Amos Kendall, postmaster-general ; and John H. Eaton, minister to Spain. Mr. Kendall succeeded William T. Barry in May, 1835, but was not confirmed until 1836. In June, 1834, the senate passed a vote of censure unanimously (yeas 41), on Mr. Barry, for borrowing money illegally of banks, on account of the postoffice department. When he resigned the office of postmaster-general, President Jackson appointed him minister to Spain, in 1835 ; his health at the time was precarious, and he died at Liverpool, in England, on the 30th of August, the same year. Mr. Eaton, formerly secretary of war, was appointed to succeed him.

The presidential election, which took place in the fall of 1836, was warmly contested. The different sections of the opposition, although they were unable to concentrate their forces upon a single candidate for president, had strong hopes of defeating the election of Mr. Van Buren by throwing the final choice into the house of representatives, and it was not believed that Mr. Van Buren could obtain a majority of the electoral votes, over all his opponents. The result was contrary to all reasonable calculations, and proved the potency of party discipline, even in electing the chief magistrate of the American republic. The great portion of the opposition supported General William H. Harrison, of Ohio, for president, but Judge White, of Tennessee, was preferred in some of the southern and south-western states, and in several states the friends of Harrison and White united on the same electoral tickets; in no instance did they run in opposition to each other, in the same state. The friends of General Harrison, generally, nominated for vice president, Francis Granger, of New York, while the supporters of Judge White nominated John Tyler, of Virginia, who also received the votes of the Harrison men in Maryland, and the state-rights men in South Carolina. Massachusetts supported Daniel Webster for president, and the vote of South Carolina was given to Willie P. Mangum, of North Carolina.

The result of the election was as follows: For president, Martin Van Buren 170, William H. Harrison 73, Hugh L. White 26, Daniel Webster 14, Willie P. Mangum 11. Total opposition, 124 votes: majority for Van Buren, 46. For vice-president, Richard M. Johnson 147, Francis Granger 77, John Tyler 47, William Smith, of Alabama (the vote of Virginia), 23. Michigan (3 votes, included in the above) was not formally admitted into the Union as a state at the time when the electors were chosen. After the votes for president and vice-president were counted in Congress, in February, 1837, the president of the senate declared Martin Van Buren elected president of the United States; and that no person had been elected vice-president. The senate, in conformity to the provisions of the constitution, then proceeded to elect a vice-president, and made choice of Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, he having 33 votes, and Francis Granger 16.

The second session of the twenty-fourth Congress commenced on the 5th of December, 1836, and terminated on the 3d of March, 1837. But few acts of general interest were passed; among them were an act to admit the state of Michigan into the Union; and acts making appropriations for harbors, rivers, roads, and lighthouses. Mr. King was continued as president of the senate *pro tem.* The most exciting subject of the session was the passage, by the senate, after a warm debate, of a resolution, on the 16th of January, offered by Mr. Benton, to expunge from the records (by drawing black lines around it) the resolution offered by Mr. Clay, and adopted on the 28th of March, 1834, viz.: "*Resolved*, That the president, in the late executive proceedings in relation to the public revenue, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and laws, but in derogation of both." The expunging resolution which was now adopted, by a vote of 24 to 19, and immediately carried into effect, by the secretary of the senate, was offered by Mr. Benton at a previous session, but was not pressed to a decision until an administration majority was secured in the senate.

In consequence of the dissatisfaction felt in the country with the operation of the specie circular of the treasury department, before mentioned, a bill passed both houses at this session, designating and limiting the funds receivable for the revenues of the United States. This bill, which provided for the reception of the notes of specie-paying banks, in certain cases, was warmly debated, and particularly opposed by Mr. Benton. The president prevented it from becoming a law, by retaining it in his hands after the adjournment of Congress; and this informal veto formed the last act of his administration. His reasons are set forth in the following paper, which was published in the Globe (the official gazette), after General Jackson retired from the presidency:—

Reasons of the president for retaining the bill designating and limiting the funds receivable for the revenues of the United States.

"WASHINGTON, *March* 3, 1837,
"¼ before 12, P. M.

"The bill from the senate entitled, 'An act designating and limiting the funds receivable for the revenues of the United States,' came to my hands yesterday, at 2 o'clock, P. M. On perusing it, I found its provisions so complex and uncertain, that I deemed it necessary to obtain the opinion of the attorney-general of the United States, on several important questions, touching its construction and effect, before I could decide on the disposition to be made of it. The attorney-general took up the subject immediately, and his reply was reported to me this day, at 5 o'clock, P. M. As this officer, after a careful and laborious examination of the bill, and a distinct expression of his opinion on the points proposed to him, still came to the conclusion that the construction of the bill, should it become a law, would be a subject of much perplexity and doubt (a view of the bill entirely coincident with my own), and as I can not think it proper, in a matter of such vital interest, and of such constant application, to approve a bill so liable to diversity of interpretation, and more especially, as I have not had time, amid the duties constantly pressing on me, to give the subject that deliberate consideration which its importance demands, I am constrained to retain the bill, without acting definitively thereon; and to the end that my reasons for this step may be fully understood, I shall cause this paper, with the opinion of the attorney-general, and the bill in question, to be deposited in the department of state.

"ANDREW JACKSON."

Having issued to his countrymen the farewell address which is to be found in the preceding pages, and which is to be considered as imbodying his political views and principles, General Jackson remained at Washington, to witness the inauguration of his chosen friend and successor, into whose hands he cheerfully committed the reins of government, and immediately went into retirement, at the Hermitage, in Tennessee.

Thus terminated the administration of Andrew Jackson; of which it may be remarked, that the space it occupies in our history is one which must always be considered an eventful era, characterized by scenes of continued agitation and excitement of the public mind. At no period since the formation of our government, have the principles of free institutions and particularly our constitution, as well as important measures bearing on the interests of the people, been discussed with more ardor and ability. The exciting topics agitated during the presidential terms of General Jackson, are too intimately connected with the partisan politics of the present day, and the events we have related are too near, to admit of impartial comment at this time. The American people are still divided in opinion, and will probably long continue so, with regard to the merits of General Jackson's administration.

We present a summary of some of the arguments on both sides, for future reference. It is claimed by his admirers, and the supporters of a similar policy, that his course as a statesman was wise, and beneficial to the country, inasmuch as the firm and decided tone displayed in the intercourse of the government with foreign powers elevated the national character, and effected the settlement of the long and protracted claims of our citizens for the former acts of injustice of those nations toward Americans; that Jackson's administration was energetic, and of a positive not negative character; that under it the national debt was extinguished, and the attention of the people turned toward a specie currency, instead of depending on the uncertainty of bank-paper exclusively for a circulation; that the firmness of General Jackson in refusing to sanction a renewal of the charter of the United States bank, and his subsequent course toward that institution, particularly in the removal of the deposites, effected the destruction of a dangerous monopoly; and that his vetoes of the Maysville road bill and other schemes of internal improvement, as well as the land bill introduced by Mr. Clay, arrested the progress of extravagance and speculation in the states and among the people.

The political opponents of General Jackson, on the contrary, contend, that inasmuch as the policy and plan of extinguishing the public debt by annual payments, had been adopted by President Monroe, twenty years before, and the system of revenue and finance established under his predecessors; the merit claimed for General Jackson, with regard to the payment of the public debt, is not justly his due; that the credit of this provident plan of gradually reducing the debt, was principally due to Mr. Lowndes, a distinguished member of Congress from South Carolina; and President Adams and the Congress acting with him, had faithfully pursued this wise and prudent course, having reduced the national debt, by the appropriation of about ten millions annually. The credit of managing our foreign relations with ability is not denied to General Jackson by his political opponents. With regard to his course in other matters, it is thus summed up by Mr. Bradford, in his history of the federal government:—

"The promises of President Jackson's friends and supporters were not realized. They, indeed, were rewarded; but not without a gross disregard to economy; and whoever would not flatter the president, nor applaud his measures, however honest, were removed from office; and his professed friends exclusively intrusted with commissions which should be given only to the upright and patriotic.

"But his arbitrary conduct in the management of the public moneys was most highly objectionable and most alarming to the friends of constitutional law, who considered the funds of the government entirely under the control of the representatives of the people; except that the executive should be allowed discretion as to the time and manner of expending the money appropriated by law. His conduct, therefore, in seizing on the public funds, and withdrawing them from the Bank of the United States, where Congress had ordered them to be deposited and kept, was very generally condemned, as an act of a most arbitrary nature, and of very dangerous precedent. And it was not so much this single act, arbitrary and unauthorized as it was, as the principle assumed by the president, in this measure, of a right in the executive to go beyond law, and contrary to law even; and to make his own opinion, rather than the laws of Congress, the rule of his conduct.

"The conduct of President Jackson was not, in all respects, so favorable to the hopes of those who had been sanguine in their belief of the perpetuity of the republic, as that of his two immediate predecessors. Of the others, it is not necessary here to speak. They made the constitution a guide in their practice as well as in their professions; and assumed little or no powers not clearly vested in the chief magistrate of the Union. In monarchies, the reigning prince has high discretionary powers. The exercise of the royal prerogative is often carried to a great extent; and thus the rights of the subjects are liable to be violated by the mere will of the king. In a republic, it is at least theoretically otherwise. Where the discretion of the magistrate is the rule and measure of his official acts, however patriotic are his purposes, equal and impartial justice can not be expected. He is not infallible, and may err in his judgment. He is subject to like passions and prejudices, as other men, and will probably act from partial and improper feelings. From this source, there is always great danger to a republican government. The people must check all usurpation, and all arbitrary assumption of power in their rulers, or their liberties will be temporary and evanescent. If several successive chief magistrates of the Union are arbitrary in administering the government, and repeatedly transcend or disregard the provisions of the constitution, many generations will not have passed, before their civil freedom will be lost beyond recovery, and the people subject to as despotic rule as that of Cæsar, or Napoleon, or the autocrat of Russia. Unless the constitution be the guide, the government of the United States, once highly blest, will be that of misrule and despotism."

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M Van Buren

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

MARTIN VAN BUREN.

THE seven presidents of the United States whose lives and administrations we have noticed in the preceding pages, it will have been observed, were all descended from emigrants from the British isles; their official terms occupy a space of forty-eight years, or nearly half a century from the adoption of the constitution; and each of them had witnessed the period when the nation acquired her independence. We now enter upon a new era, and, leaving those whose early lives carry our memories back to the men and the times of our revolutionary struggle, we proceed to sketch the career of our eighth president, who, to use his own words, "unlike all who have preceded him, was born after the revolution was achieved;" belonging, also, to another race by descent, as well as to a later age.

The ancestors of Mr. Van Buren, both paternal and maternal, were among the early emigrants from Holland to the colony of New Netherlands, now the state of New York. The family have always resided in the ancient town of Kinderhook, Columbia county, on the east bank of the Hudson river. The father of the president, Abraham Van Buren, was a farmer of moderate circumstances, who is represented to have been an upright and intelligent man, of strong common sense, and pacific disposition. The maiden name of the mother of the president was Hoes, also of Dutch descent. The name was originally Goes, and was one of some distinction in the history of the Netherlands. She was twice married; first to Mr. Van Alen, by whom she had two sons and a daughter, all of whom have been many years deceased. James I. Van Alen was a respectable lawyer of Columbia county, who was honored with several important offices, and with whom his younger half-brother was connected in business at his entrance to the bar.

The mother of Mr. Van Buren was distantly connected with the family of his father before their marriage. She was distinguished for her amiable disposition, sagacity, and exemplary piety. She survived until 1818, four years after the death of her second husband.

Martin Van Buren is the eldest son of these parents. He was born at Kinderhook, December, 5, 1782. At an early age he exhibited indications of a superior understanding. His opportunities of instruction were limited, probably on account of the moderate property of his father, who had two other sons, and two daughters.*

After acquiring the rudiments of an English education, he became a student in the academy, in his native village. He there made considerable progress in the various branches of English literature, and gained some knowledge of Latin. It may be inferred, however, that all these acquisitions were not great in amount, as he left the academy, when but fourteen years of age, to begin the study of his profession.

At that early period he evinced a strong passion for extempore speaking and literary composition. Even at that early age, too, he is represented, by those who knew him, to have had a spirit of observation, with regard to public events, and the personal dispositions and characters of those around him, which gave an earnest of his future proficiency in the science of politics and of the human heart.

In the year 1796, at the age of fourteen, Mr. Van Buren commenced the study of the law, in the office of Francis Sylvester, Esq., a respectable lawyer of Kinderhook. The courts of law in the state of New York have adhered more closely to the English forms of practice than has been done in most of the other states. The period of study preparatory to admission to the bar, was seven years, for candidates who, like the subject of this memoir, had not the benefit of a collegiate education.

The management of cases in courts held by justices of the peace, not unfrequently devolved upon students at law. The early indications of ability as a speaker and reasoner, which were exhibited by Mr. Van Buren, occasioned his almost incessant employment in trials in these courts, from the earliest period of commencing the study of his profession. His father was a firm whig in the revolution, and a democrat in the days of John Adams; and the son was educated in the same principles, and of course formed his most intimate connexion with persons of the same political faith. The democratic party was then a small minority in the town and county of his nativity. His political opinions, as well as his talents, led to his employment by the members of his own party, in their controversies with regard to personal rights, and rights of property. It often happened that, in the management of cases, he encountered men of age, talent, and high standing in the profession.

At this early period Mr. Van Buren was an ardent and active politician. It was his constant habit to attend all meetings of the democratic party, to study with attention the political intelligence of the day, and to yield his most zealous aid to the principles he held to be true. As early as 1800, when only in his eighteenth year, and still a student at law, he was deputed by the republicans in his native town, to attend a convention of delegates to nominate a candidate for the legislature. He had similar marks of the confidence of his political friends, on other occasions during his minority.

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* For part of this memoir we are indebted to Professor Holland's Life of Van Buren.

The last year of Mr. Van Buren's preparatory studies was passed in the city of New York, in the office of Mr. William P. Van Ness, and under his direction. This gentleman was a native of Columbia county, but at that time a distinguished member of the bar in the city of New York, and a very conspicuous leader of the democratic party. In this situation Mr. Van Buren had every possible advantage for improvement; and his thirst for knowledge, together with his aptitude in acquiring it, enabled him to make great advances.

Mr. Van Ness was a devoted and intimate friend of Colonel Aaron Burr, at that time vice-president of the United States; and in the feud which sprung up after the presidential election, between the respective friends of the president and vice-president, Mr. Van Ness advocated the cause of Colonel Burr, through the public press, with signal ability. Through the medium of this gentleman, Mr. Van Buren was introduced to the notice of the vice-president, who was led, by his knowledge of the young lawyer's activity and influence in his native county, as well as by a quick-sighted observation of the future eminence promised by his early display of talent, to treat him with marked attention, and to make every reasonable effort to secure his favorable regard. The tact and ability displayed by Colonel Burr in the great political contest which resulted in elevating Mr. Jefferson and himself to the highest offices in the gift of the people, and the reputation he had acquired as a leader of the party, caused him to be looked upon as an oracle of political wisdom, particularly by young and ardent democrats, who were desirous of availing themselves of instruction from so experienced and influential a source. Among the maxims of Colonel Burr for the guidance of politicians, one of the most prominent was, that the people at elections were to be managed by the same rules of discipline as the soldiers of an army; that a few leaders were to think for the masses; and that the latter were to obey implicitly their leaders, and to move only at the word of command. He had, therefore, great confidence in the machinery of party, and that system of regular nominations in American politics of which he may perhaps be considered one of the founders. Educated as a military man, and imbibing his early views with regard to governing others, in the camp, it is not surprising that Colonel Burr should have applied the rules of military life to politics, and always inculcated the importance of discipline in the ranks of a party, to insure its ultimate success. In no part of the United States have these party rules been more constantly and rigidly enforced, than among the democrats of the state of New York; and to their steady adherence to them may be attributed the long succession of triumphs which have been achieved by the party with whom Mr. Van Buren has uniformly acted.

In November, 1803, in the twenty-first year of his age, Mr. Van Buren was admitted, as an attorney at law, to the bar of the supreme court in the state of New York, and immediately returned to his native village, to commence the practice of his profession. He formed a partnership in business with the Hon. James I. Van Alen, a half-brother on his mother's side, and a gentleman who was considerably his senior. The bar of Columbia county, at that time, embraced some of the most distinguished members of the legal profession in the state of New York, among whom were William W. Van Ness (afterward a judge of the supreme court of the state), Elisha Williams, Thomas P. Grosvenor, and Jacob R. Van Rensselaer. Other names might be mentioned as then in the field of competition upon which the youthful subject of this sketch then entered. The state of political parties at the period shows the difficulties with which he contended.

At the time when Mr. Van Buren commenced his professional career, the violence of party spirit was extreme throughout the country. The state of New York was fearfully agitated by its influence; and in the county of Mr. Van Buren's residence, political dissensions were carried to the greatest extremities. The administration of the federal government had then passed, after a violent struggle, into the hands of the democratic party, but it was considered by no means certain that their ascendency would be of long continuance. In the state of New York generally, the democratic party triumphed in the elections after 1800; but in the county of Columbia the federal party long held the reins of power. The landholders in Kinderhook and its vicinity had inherited large estates from a long line of wealthy ancestors, and had exercised, by proscription, an influence over their tenants and the more recent emigrants, analogous in its nature, and almost in its extent, to the baronial prerogatives of feudal lords. The great mass of mercantile and professional men in the county were dependent upon these wealthy freeholders for patronage, as also were the laborers and mechanics, in a still greater degree. The members of these families were generally federalists, and looked with anxious disapprobation upon any efforts to extend popular rights. Toward the champions of the democracy they exhibited neither liberality nor toleration, but carried on a warfare against them, both in public and private, of the most obstinate and embittered character.

Mr. Van Buren's early exhibition of energy and talent attracted their attention, and no ordinary pains were taken to detach him from the connexion he had chosen with the democracy. The gentleman with whom he had studied his profession, Mr. Sylvester, and his relative and partner in business, Mr. Van Alen, were federalists, and by their example and advice endeavored to withdraw him from a political connexion which they viewed as wrong, and injurious to his prospects in business. "Firmly fixed in the political faith of his father, who was a whig in the revolution, an anti-federalist in 1788, and an early supporter of Jefferson, the subject of this memoir," says his biographer, "shrunk not from the severe tests which were applied to the strength and integrity of his convictions. Without patronage, comparatively poor, a plebeian by birth, and not furnished with the advantages of a superior education, he refused to worship, either at the shrine of wealth or power, but followed the dictates of his native judgment, and hesitated not, in behalf of the cause which he thus adopted, to encounter the utmost violence of his political enemies."

Thus connected with the democratic party, he naturally became the vindicator, not only of their political faith, but of their legal rights. The conflicts in which he engaged, rapidly invigorated and enlarged his natural powers. It was soon seen that he was able to cope with the ablest of his opponents in the local courts. In 1807 he was admitted as a counsellor in the supreme court, where he was brought into more immediate collision with the most distinguished members of the profession. In 1808 he was appointed surrogate of Columbia county, soon after which he removed to the city of Hudson, where he resided during seven years, and rapidly advanced toward a high rank in his profession. In 1815 he was appointed attorney-general of the state, at which time his practice in the courts had become extensive and lucrative. His career as a lawyer occupies a period of twenty-five years, and was closed in the spring of 1828.

Mr. Van Buren was married in 1806, to Miss Hannah Hoes, who was distantly related to him before their marriage. The intimacy which resulted in this union, was formed in very early life. His ardent attachment to her was evinced on all occasions until the period of her decease, by consumption, in 1818. This lady left him a family of four sons, and Mr. Van Buren has since remained a widower.

Having thus noted the professional and private life of Mr. Van Buren, it remains briefly to sketch his career as a politician and statesman.

His first active participation in political affairs, was in the great contest which preceded the elevation of Mr. Jefferson to the presidency, in 1801. At the early age of eighteen years we find him intrusted with the expression of the political views of a portion of the democratic party, as we have already stated, in being chosen a delegate to a convention. His abilities were put in requisition on that occasion, in preparing an address to the electors of the district in which he resided.

In the spring of 1804, he made his first appearance at the polls as an elector. At that election Morgan Lewis and Aaron Burr (then vice-president of the United States) were the opposing candidates for governor of New York. Both belonged to the democratic party, but the former received the regular nomination of a majority of the democrats in the legislature, while the latter was supported by a smaller section of the party, and a portion of the federalists. In Columbia county Colonel Burr was warmly sustained by many leading politicians, among whom were some of Mr. Van Buren's best friends. During his own residence as a student at law in the city of New York, with Mr. William P. Van Ness, a friend of Burr, he had received many flattering marks of attention from the vice-president. But true to his own principles and the spirit of his party, Mr. Van Buren gave his vigorous and unhesitating support to Mr. Lewis, at the hazard of a temporary estrangement from several valued democratic friends.

In 1807 the antagonist candidates for governor were Morgan Lewis and Daniel D. Tompkins. The latter was then the candidate of a large majority of the democratic party; Governor Lewis receiving the support of the federalists and a few democrats. Tompkins was elected by a large majority of votes; he received Mr. Van Buren's most zealous and decided support on this occasion, also in 1810 and 1813; the views of these two leaders of the democratic party generally agreeing on the prominent political questions of the period.

In 1808 Mr. Van Buren was appointed surrogate of Columbia county, and retained the office until February, 1813, when, the federalists having obtained the ascendency in the state, he was removed. It may be here remarked, that the administration of Mr. Jefferson, during its whole course, received his constant support. The non-intercourse act, the embargo, and other measures of Mr. Jefferson, received his hearty concurrence. He warmly defended and justified the course of George Clinton, then vice-president of the United States, in giving his casting vote, in February, 1811, against the bill for renewing the charter of the first bank of the United States. It is curious to notice in this place, that the renewal of the charter of the bank was recommended by Mr. Gallatin, then secretary of the treasury, and sustained in the senate by William H. Crawford, two gentlemen whom Mr. Van Buren joined with others in recommending for president and vice-president of the United States in 1824.

In 1812 Mr. Van Buren was, for the first time, a candidate for an elective office, having been nominated as a senator from the counties then comprising the middle district of the state. His opponent was Edward P. Livingston, belonging also to the democracy; a man of wealth and powerful family connexions, and supported by the bank democrats and the entire federal party of the district. The contest was one of the most violent ever known in the state, and resulted in the election of Mr. Van Buren, by a majority of about 200, in an aggregate of twenty thousand votes. Thus, in the thirtieth year of his age, he was placed in the highest branch of the legislature of his native state.

Previous to his election, the democratic members of the legislature of

New York had, in the spring of 1812, nominated De Witt Clinton for president of the United States, and in November, 1812, the succeeding legislature met for the purpose of choosing presidential electors. On this occasion Mr. Van Buren took his seat in the senate, and voted for the electoral ticket which was elected, and which gave Mr. Clinton the vote of the state. In supporting the nomination of Mr. Clinton, Mr. Van Buren consulted what he believed to be the wishes of the majority of the democratic party of the state. At the same time, he was an open and decided advocate of all the strong measures proposed against Great Britain during the session of Congress in 1811–'12, the war included. And, though in the choice of electors Mr. Clinton received the votes of some of the federal members of the legislature of New York, and was also supported by that party in other states, Mr. Van Buren's relations to it were entirely unaltered. At the same session he was placed upon the committee of the senate to answer the governor's speech, which answer he prepared and reported. It vindicated the justice of the war, and urged a vigorous prosecution of it. At the ensuing session of the legislature, which commenced in 1813, the political relations previously existing between Mr. Clinton and Mr. Van Buren were dissolved, and never again resumed. From the commencement of his legislative career, Mr. Van Buren gave to all war measures the most decided and vigorous support; among which was a plan for raising troops by classification. He supported the re-election of Governor Tompkins, and, as chairman of the committee which made the nomination, he prepared the address to the republican electors of the state.

In 1815, Mr. Van Buren received the appointment of attorney-general of the state of New York. The same year he was appointed by the legislature a regent of the university. In the spring of 1816 he was re-elected to the senate for the further period of four years.

When the project of internal improvement in the state of New York, by canals from Lakes Erie and Champlain to the Hudson river, was brought before the legislature, in 1816, it was sustained with zeal and ability by Mr. Van Buren, who on this occasion received the personal thanks of Mr. Clinton, the great advocate of the measure, for his exertions in favor of the same.

In 1817 De Witt Clinton was nominated for governor of the state of New York, in place of Daniel D. Tompkins, who had been elected vice-president of the United States. Mr. Van Buren acquiesced in this nomination, though it was contrary to his individual wishes and opinions, and he had used his exertions to prevent it. The distinguished talents of Mr. Clinton, and his zealous efforts in promoting the great interests of the state, had so far won the respect and confidence of the people, that there was comparatively little opposition to his election, after his nomination. But, though he received nearly the unanimous vote of both the great political parties throughout the state, the result proved that it was a deceitful calm which followed the election, and that, as a large portion of the democratic party were deadly hostile to the newly-elected governor, the elements for bitter party strife were only temporarily concealed.

We must now revert to the presidential election of 1816, for the purpose of showing Mr. Van Buren's course in that affair, and the bearing that election had on the politics of New York.

During the war, Governor Tompkins and Mr. Van Buren were considered the leaders of the democratic party in the state of New York. The public services and great personal popularity of Governor Tompkins, induced President Madison to offer him a seat in his cabinet, as secretary of state, which office, however, he declined. As the secretary of state was then, according to established usage, heir apparent to the presidential chair, and the admitted favorite of the president for the time being, Governor Tompkins considered the offer of Mr. Madison as a commitment on the part of the administration to support him for the next president. It was therefore expected, in the state of New York, that Tompkins would succeed Madison as president; and at a celebration of the return of peace, at Albany, in February, 1815, a splendid transparency was displaced, with the names of Tompkins and Crawford inscribed thereon. This indicated that the latter was expected to be nominated for vice-president.

The democratic members of the New York legislature, in February, 1816, instructed the members of Congress from the state to sustain the claims of Tompkins, and Mr. Van Buren visited Washington to aid his friend in the nomination. But his claims were not pressed in the congressional caucus which met in March, 1816; the contest in that body was between Monroe and Crawford, and the former was nominated by a small majority over the latter. Governor Tompkins was nominated for vice-president, a result at which he was much disappointed. Finding Tompkins out of the question for president, a majority of the New York delegation was rather ardent in support of Crawford. Mr. Van Buren took no decided part in the matter. Mr. Hammond, who was one of the New York delegation, remarks, that "if at Albany Mr. Van Buren was ardent in the support of Tompkins, at Washington, to say the least, he was philosophically calm and cool."*

From this time forward Mr. Van Buren co-operated with the leading democratic politicians of Virginia; and when it was determined by them that Mr. Crawford should be the successor of Mr. Monroe as president, Mr. Van Buren gave him his most zealous, though unsuccessful support, in the political campaign of 1824.

Having determined to oppose the administration of Governor Clinton, Mr. Van Buren, being then a member of the senate of the state, commenced, in 1818, the organization of that portion of the democratic party

* Hammond's Political History of New York.

who were dissatisfied with the election of the governor. Hence arose the formation, under his auspices, of a small but formidable and secret association of politicians at the seat of the state government, which received from their political opponents the cognomen of "the Albany regency." It was composed of persons holding offices under the state and the general governments, and a few other influential citizens of the democratic party; and by skill, position, and party discipline, with the aid of a party press, this regency is supposed to have swayed the power and destinies of the state for more than a quarter of a century. It is proper to mention, however, that the existence of this Albany regency has been generally denied by the friends of Mr. Van Buren.

The difficulties in the democratic party between the respective friends of Mr. Van Buren and Governor Clinton, soon widened into an open rupture. A large majority of the democrats of the state followed Mr. Van Buren, while most of the friends of the canal policy, and the great body of the federal party, with few exceptions, sustained Governor Clinton. The council of appointment being devoted to the views of Governor Clinton, in July, 1819, removed Mr. Van Buren from the office of attorney-general, the duties of which he had discharged for more than four years, during which period he had also been a member of the senate.

The opposition to Governor Clinton constantly increased in violence, and in the senate of the state there was a majority against him during the whole period of his administration. The most strenuous exertions were made by his democratic opponents to prevent his re-election. Mr. Van Buren took the lead in their efforts, and the vice-president, Daniel D. Tompkins, was prevailed upon to become the opposing candidate for governor. The contest was close and animated, Mr. Clinton being successful by a majority of 1,457 out of 93,437 votes. The whole number of votes against him on his former election was but twenty-two more than his present majority. Both houses of the legislature, and the council of appointment, however, were decidedly anti-Clintonian. A restoration to the office of attorney-general was now tendered to Mr. Van Buren, but was declined by him.

The legislature having failed to elect a senator of the United States, in 1819, in place of Mr. Rufus King, whose term of service expired that year, a pamphlet was prepared by Mr. Van Buren, shortly before the meeting of the succeeding legislature, in 1820, in favor of the election by the democratic party of Mr. King to the senate for another term of six years. Mr. King, it will be remembered, was a federalist, and had been one of the most prominent leaders of that party in the United States, while they acted as an organized political body. Mr. Van Buren and his friends had refused to vote for Mr. King in the legislature of 1819, but his election was now urged on democrats, in consequence of his having supported the last war; his revolutionary services, and his present opposition to Mr.

Clinton, were assigned as further reasons for supporting him. The real object of the pamphlet was to draw in a portion of the federalists throughout the state, to the support of Mr. Tompkins in the then approaching election. The friends of Mr. Van Buren were in the minority in the legislature, and were, therefore, compelled to choose between Mr. King, or some other federalist, and a friend of Governor Clinton. The result was, the election of Mr. King, by the legislature, by a vote nearly unanimous, the Clintonians also supporting him.

At the same session of the legislature, a resolution was adopted, instructing their senators, and requesting the representatives of the state in Congress, to oppose the admission of Missouri, or any other territory into the Union, without making the prohibition of slavery therein an indispensable condition of admission. The senate concurred in this resolution from the assembly without division or debate, and among the senators Mr. Van Buren, though it was not brought before the legislature by his agency. Still, he must be regarded as having concurred, at that time, in the sentiment of the resolution thus adopted by the legislature.*

Mr. Van Buren was, in February, 1821, elected by the legislature of New York, a member of the senate of the United States, in place of Nathan Sanford, whose term of service expired in March, 1821. Mr. Sanford was a democrat and a candidate for re-election, but at the legislative caucus, which was attended by eighty-two democratic members, Mr. Van Buren received fifty-eight votes, and Mr. Sanford twenty-four. The Clintonians and federalists in the legislature voted for Mr. Sanford, who received sixty votes, and Mr. Van Buren eighty-six votes. Thus it will be observed, that Mr. Sanford was the preference of a large majority of the legislature, and without the agency of a caucus nomination Mr. Van Buren could not have been chosen.

A convention to revise the constitution of the state of New York, was chosen by the people in 1821, and assembled in August of that year. Mr. Van Buren, then United States senator elect, was elected a member of the convention, by the democrats of Otsego county, although he then resided in the city of Albany.

In this convention, which comprised many of the most able and influential men in the state, Mr. Van Buren took an active and leading part. There were three classes of politicians in that body: first, those opposed to any important changes in the old constitution of 1777, except the abolition of the council of appointment and the council of revision; second, those in favor of moderate changes in the constitution, of the abolition of the freehold qualification for voters, and the reasonable extension of the elective franchise; third, the radicals, or those in favor of universal suffrage, and an entire and radical change in the form of government. Mr. Van Buren belonged to the second of these classes, and his course in the convention was generally conservative. He advocated an extension of the right of suffrage to citizens paying taxes, being householders, and working on the highways, or doing military duty; he expressed his fears that the extension of the elective franchise contemplated by some of the amendments proposed, would not be sanctioned by the public approbation, and would occasion the rejection of the whole by the people. He said, "he was disposed to go as far as any man in the extension of rational liberty; but he could not consent to undervalue this precious privilege so far as to confer it, with an indiscriminating hand, upon every one, black or white, who would be kind enough to condescend to accept it." By the first constitution of New York, no distinction was made with regard to *color*, in the qualifications of electors. In the convention, a proposition to restrict the right of voting to *white* citizens, was rejected by a majority of four votes. Mr. Van Buren voted with the majority, or in favor of continuing the right of voting to colored citizens; but subsequently supported a proposition, which was adopted, requiring colored voters to possess a freehold estate of the value of two hundred and fifty dollars. Mr. Van Buren opposed the election of justices of the peace by the people, and the convention adopted a plan proposed by him, by which the executive of the state, through the judges of the county courts, controlled those appointments. This plan only continued in operation about four years, when the constitution was amended, giving the choice of justices to the people. The proposition which was adopted by the convention to reorganize the judiciary of the state, and sanctioned by the party with which he acted, was opposed by Mr. Van Buren, the only effect of it being to displace the judges then in office. On the whole, it may be remarked, that his course in the convention to revise the constitution, was considered honorable to him as a stateman, and, with few exceptions, was approved by candid men of all parties.

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* Holland.

In December, 1821, Mr. Van Buren took his seat in the senate of the United States, his colleague from New York at this time being the Honorable Rufus King. On his first appearance in the senate, he was placed on the committee of finance, and on the committee on the judiciary. He took an active part in debate on most of the important subjects which were agitated in that branch of Congress during his senatorial career. .He supported Colonel Johnson's efforts to abolish imprisonment for debt on actions in the United States courts. He proposed amendments to the judiciary system of the United States, and advocated a bankrupt law, to include corporations as well as persons. Wlth regard to the public lands, he was in favor of a proposition to vest the lands in the states in which they were situated on " some just and equitable terms."

When the question of a successor to Mr. Monroe for the presidency was agitated, Mr. Van Buren took an early and decided part in favor of Mr. Crawford, whose election he labored to bring about by the aid of party machinery and discipline, particularly the system of regular nominations, as established in the state of New York, and had been practised by the democratic party in previous nominations of president and vice-president, by a caucus of members of Congress. The congressional caucus which nominated Mr. Crawford, in February, 1824, proved a signal failure, as it was attended by only about one fourth of the whole number of the members of Congress. In the state of New York, where the friends of Mr. Van Buren had defeated a law proposed to provide for the choice of presidential electors by the people, and retained the choice in the legislature, Mr. Crawford only obtained five of the thirty-six electoral votes of the state. The election of president devolved on the house of representatives, and Mr. Adams was elected on the first ballot, receiving the vote of New York, although the friends of Mr. Van Buren adhered to Mr. Crawford.

In the gubernatorial election in the state of New York, in 1824, the party which acted with Mr. Van Buren met with a decisive defeat, and De Witt Clinton was elected governor. The next year, however, the party recovered its power in the state; but Mr. Clinton was re-elected in 1826, and continued in office until his death, in February, 1828.

Mr. Van Buren took an active part in the opposition which was organized against the administration of Mr. Adams immediately after his election to the presidency. He opposed the mission to Panama, and most of the bills for internal improvement. His personal feelings were adverse to a high tariff of duties for protection, but as his constituents were generally in favor of protective duties, he voted for the tariff laws of 1824 and 1828.

In February, 1827, Mr. Van Buren was re-elected to the United States senate for another term of six years, by the legislature of New York. Circumstances, however, soon occurred to cause his resignation. He was zealous and active in sustaining General Jackson for the presidency in opposition to Mr. Adams, in 1828. Governor Clinton, who was also favorable to the election of Jackson, died suddenly, in February, 1828. This event induced the political friends of Mr. Van Buren to nominate him for governor of the state, to succeed Mr. Clinton, and he was elected to that office in November, 1828.

Having resigned his seat in the senate of the United States, Mr. Van Buren entered upon the duties of the office of governor, January 1, 1829. His message to the legislature was remarkable for the attention bestowed upon banks and the currency. On the 20th of January, in a brief message, he introduced to the legislature the celebrated safety-fund system. This plan originated with the Hon. Joshua Forman, and was by him laid before Mr. Van Buren. It was somewhat modified by the suggestion of the latter, and finally adopted by the legislature. The safety-fund system combined the moneyed interests of the state in a league of mutual dependence, but the experience of a few years proved its inadequacy to answer public expectation.

Mr. Van Buren remained but a short time in the chief magistracy of his native state. On the 12th of March, 1829, he resigned the office of governor, in consequence of his appointment as secretary of state of the United States. Of this appointment, General Jackson (who was said to have intended to have offered it to Governor Clinton, had he lived) said, in his letter to the democratic members of the legislature of New York, in February, 1832: "In calling him [Mr. Van Buren] to the department of state, from the exalted station he then occupied, I was not influenced more by his acknowledged talents and public services, than by the general wish of the republican party throughout the Union."

Of Mr. Van Buren's course as secretary of state we have already taken notice, in our account of General Jackson's administration. The causes of the dissolution of the cabinet have also been stated. In June, 1831, Mr. Van Buren retired from the office of secretary of state, and was immediately appointed by the president minister to Great Britain. He arrived in London in September, 1831, and was received with distinguished favor at the court of St. James.

Soon after the meeting of Congress, the president submitted the nomination of Mr. Van Buren to the senate. He was rejected by that body, in consequence of their disapproval of the instructions which he issued, while secretary of state, to Mr. M'Lane, our minister to England, in reference to the West India trade.

The democratic party condemned the rejection of Mr. Van Buren as an act of political persecution, and vindicated the propriety of his course. The democratic members of the legislature of New York addressed a letter to the president, expressing their indignation at what they deemed a proscriptive act of the senate, and their high respect for the public and private character of Mr. Van Buren. The president, in reply, assumed the entire responsibility of the instructions condemned by the senate; declared they were "the result of his own deliberate investigation and reflection, and still appeared to him to be entirely proper and consonant to his public duty."

On the 22d of May, 1832, Mr. Van Buren was nominated as a candidate for vice-president, by a national democratic convention assembled at Baltimore, and at the same time with the renomination of General Jackson for president. The result was the triumphant election of both to the respective offices to which they were nominated, Mr. Van Buren receiving the same number of electoral votes as General Jackson, with the exception of those of Pennsylvania, the democracy of which state refused to give him their vote; and it was given to William Wilkins, of that state.

Mr. Van Buren returned from England to triumph over his political opponents, by being elevated to the second office in the government. He was inaugurated as vice-president on the 4th of March, 1833, and presided over the senate for four years, when in session; during which he had the good fortune to escape the censure of all parties. In 1833 he accompanied General Jackson in his tour to the eastern states.

To secure the support of the democratic party as a candidate for the presidency, as successor to General Jackson, whose favor and good wishes he already possessed, Mr. Van Buren seems to have relied upon an avowal of hostility to a national bank, and on a national convention for the nomination of president and vice-president. Accordingly, we find him giving as a sentiment, at a public entertainment, "Uncompromising hostility to the United States bank; the honor and interest of the country require it;" which toast was adopted as a motto, by the democratic party. We also find the most strenuous efforts made to reconcile Pennsylvania to a national nominating convention, which efforts were finally successful.

On the 20th of May, 1835, the Jackson democratic convention met at Baltimore, for the nomination of a candidate to succeed General Jackson as president, also a vice-president of the United States. About 600 delegates were in attendance; and as all were selected as friends of Mr. Van Buren, he received the unanimous vote of the convention, for president. Colonel Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, was nominated for vice-president. These nominations, it was well understood, received the express approbation of General Jackson, and the influence of the administration was, of course, exercised in favor of the election of these candidates.

The result of the vote by the electoral colleges was 170 for Mr. Van Buren, including Michigan (3), which was informal, and 124 for all other candidates. There was no choice of vice-president by the people, in consequence of the state of Virginia refusing to vote for Colonel Johnson. He received 147 electoral votes, including Michigan, and there were 147 for all other candidates. Colonel Johnson was, thereupon, elected by the senate, agreeably to the constitution.

Mr. Van Buren was inaugurated as president, on the fourth of March, 1837. The history of the four years of his administration is given in another place in this volume, to which we refer for this part of his life. In May, 1840, he was nominated for re-election, by a convention of his political friends, but such was the unpopularity of his measures as chief magistrate of the nation, that the election of 1840 resulted in the total defeat of Mr. Van Buren and the party with which he was connected, and the triumphant success of the whig candidates, General Harrison and Mr. Tyler, to the presidency and vice-presidency. The electoral votes for Harrison were 234—for Van Buren 60.

General Harrison succeeded Mr. Van Buren, as president, on the 4th of March, 1841; soon after which the ex-president left Washington for his seat at Kinderhook, Columbia county, New York, near the Hudson river, to which retreat he gave the name of "Lindenwold." He attended on the occasion of the funeral honors which were paid to General Harrison in the city of New York, in 1841.

Having acquired, during an active professional and political life, a large fortune, Mr. Van Buren retired to his estate before mentioned, to enjoy the possession of his wealth, and retaining the confidence of the large and powerful party of his countrymen which had sustained him. His friends, however, were not willing that he should rest under the political sentence which had been pronounced against him, as they deemed, under fortuitous circumstances. It was argued that, as an act of justice to him, he should be elected for another term to the presidency, to place him in history along side of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson, who were considered as the four democratic presidents, each of whom had been honored with a second term in the presidential chair. The most strenuous efforts, therefore, were made to effect the nomination of Mr. Van Buren for the presidency, in 1844; and when the democratic national convention met to nominate a president, in May of that year, there was an apparent majority of his friends in that body. But a new element was introduced into the political canvass for the presidency, by the democratic party, namely, the annexation of Texas to the United States. To that measure Mr. Van Buren had expressed himself adverse, in some particulars, in a letter to a southern gentleman, which was published previous to the meeting of the convention. Some of his friends regretted that he had not inserted a clause in his letter which, looking to the certain extension of the limits of the republic, would have been satisfactory to the democrats of the south. After protracted ballottings, it was found that Mr. Van Buren could not obtain the vote of two thirds of the delegates to the convention, as required by their rules. His name was therefore withdrawn, and James K. Polk, of Tennessee, received the nomination for president.

In the nomination of Mr. Polk, Mr. Van Buren cordially acquiesced, and urged upon his political friends the propriety and importance of sustaining the same in good faith. By the efforts of the democrats of New York, the election of Mr. Polk was effected, the popular majority in that important state, which turned the scale in favor of the democratic candidates, being but about one per cent. on the whole number of votes.

We conclude this brief memoir of Mr. Van Buren with the following notice of his personal appearance and character, from his life, by Professor Holland, written, of course, with all the partiality of friendship:—

"In personal appearance, Mr. Van Buren is about the middle size; his form is erect (and formerly slender, but now inclining to corpulence), and is said to be capable of great endurance. His hair and eyes are light, his features animated and expressive, especially the eye, which is indicative of quick apprehension and close observation; his forehead exhibits in its depth and expansion, the marks of great intellectual power. The physiognomist would accord to him penetration, quickness of apprehension, and benevolence of disposition. The phrenologist would add unusual reflective faculties, firmness, and caution.

"The private character of Mr. Van Buren is above all censure or suspicion. In the relations of father and son, of husband, brother, and friend, he has always displayed those excellencies of character and feeling which adorn human nature. Extending our view to the larger circle of his personal friends, rarely has any man won a stronger hold upon the confidence and affection of those with whom he has been connected. The purity of his motives, his integrity of character, and the steadiness of his attachments, have always retained for him the warm affection of many, even among the ranks of his political opponents.

"The ease and frankness of his manners, his felicitous powers of conversation, and the general amiableness of his feelings, render him the ornament of the social circle. Uniting in his character, firmness and forbearance; habitual self-respect and a delicate regard for the feelings of others; neither the perplexities of legal practice, nor the cares of public life, nor the annoyance of party strife, have ever been able to disturb the serenity of his temper, or to derange for a moment the equanimity of his deportment. He has with equal propriety mingled in the free intercourse of private life, and sustained the dignity of official station."

ADMINISTRATION OF VAN BUREN.

The inauguration of Martin Van Buren, as the eighth president of the United States, took place at the capitol, in the city of Washington, on Saturday, the 4th of March, 1837. At twelve o'clock on that day, the weather being remarkably pleasant, the president elect took his seat with his venerable predecessor, General Jackson, in a beautiful phaeton made from the wood of the frigate Constitution, and presented to General Jackson by the democracy of the city of New York. They were escorted from the president's house to the capitol, through Pennsylvania avenue, by a body of cavalry and infantry, and were also accompanied by an immense concourse of citizens. After reaching the senate-chamber the procession was formed, and Mr. Van Buren, attended by the ex-president, the members of the senate, of the cabinet, and the diplomatic corps, led the way to the rostrum erected on the ascent to the eastern portico. He then delivered his inaugural address, in clear and impressive tones, and in an easy and eloquent manner. At the close of the address, the oath of office was administered by Chief-Justice Taney.

The language of the inaugural address, the assurances of the government official journal, published at the seat of government, and other declarations, satisfied the people that the measures of Mr. Van Buren's administration would be a continuation of those adopted by General Jackson, and consequently no change might be expected. The new president selected for his cabinet, John Forsyth, of Georgia, for secretary of state; Levi Woodbury, of New Hampshire, secretary of the treasury; Joel R. Poinsett, of South Carolina, secretary of war; Mahlon Dickerson, of New Jersey, secretary of the navy; Amos Kendall, of Kentucky, postmaster-general; and Benjamin F. Butler, of New York, attorney-general. All of these gentlemen, except Mr. Poinsett, had been appointed by General Jackson to the respective offices named, and they were continued by Mr. Van Buren. Mr. Poinsett succeeded General Cass, who, in 1836, was appointed by General Jackson minister to France.

Early in the year 1837, indications were perceived of a money pressure of unexampled severity, not produced as that of 1834 had been, by the contest with the bank of the United States (for that institution was now only a state bank, and so much embarrassed as to be powerless), but other and more formidable causes. It was some time before those unacquainted with banking operations could be induced to believe the alarm of the bankers in New York and other cities to be so well founded, as experience proved it really was. It was not until the failure of several great commercial and banking houses in New York, New Orleans, and other Atlantic cities, that the panic became general among the people.

The specie circular issued by General Jackson in the summer of 1836, which we have noticed in our account of his administration, had been powerful in its operation upon the banks and currency. This circular, or order, requiring all payments for the public lands to be made in gold or silver, produced frequent and sometimes large drafts for specie on the banks. This course not only prevented the banks from extending their line of discount, but compelled them to commence calling in their circulating notes.

The distribution of the surplus funds among the several states also seriously embarrassed the operations of the banks, and, from the mode in which it was managed, contributed to derange the currency. The banks with whom the accumulated surplus had been deposited, were not prepared for the distribution, inasmuch as they had presumed these funds would generally remain in deposite with them until the exigencies of the government should require its expenditure, and had, therefore, treated the funds of the United States as so much capital on which they could make loans to their customers. They had, therefore, undoubtedly, made large loans, relying on these government funds as an addition to their ordinary means, not likely soon to be called for.

The order issued from the treasury department, in pursuance of the law, for the distribution of these funds among the several states, was to the banks extremely embarrassing, and compelled them to call in their loans. They complained that the mode of distribution adopted by the secretary, Mr. Woodbury, was unwise and unnecessarily oppressive.

Another cause of pecuniary embarrassment and pressure was the excessive importation of merchandise from Europe, beyond the abilities and wants of the country, payments for which falling due, and American credit being impaired in London, occasioned a demand on the banks for specie, to be shipped to Europe.

The reaction in speculation had now commenced, and this accumulation of difficulties could not be withstood by the banks. On the 10th of May, 1837, all the banks in the city of New York, without exception, by common consent, suspended payments in specie. The banks of Boston, Providence, Hartford, Albany, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and others in every quarter, on learning that the banks in New York had suspended specie payments, adopted the same course. On the 16th of May, the legislature of New York passed an act authorizing the suspension of specie payments by the banks of that state for one year.

During the preceding two months, unprecedented embarrassments and difficulties were experienced among the mercantile classes, and were felt in all the commercial towns in the United States; especially in New York and New Orleans. The number of large failures which took place in New York in a short time, was about three hundred, their liabilities amounting to many millions. In two days, houses in New Orleans stopped payment, owing an aggregate of twenty-seven millions of dollars. In Boston one hundred and sixty-eight failures took place in six months.

A committee was appointed by a numerous meeting of the citizens of New York, to proceed to Washington and request the president of the United States to rescind the specie circular, to defer commencing suits upon unpaid bonds, and to call an extra meeting of Congress. In their interview with the president they presented an address stating, that "under a deep impression of the propriety of confining their declarations within moderate limits, they affirmed, that the value of their real estate had, within the last six months, depreciated more than forty millions of dollars; that within the preceding two months there had been more than two hundred and fifty failures of houses engaged in extensive business; that within the same period a decline of twenty millions had occurred in their local stocks, including those railroad and canal incorporations which, though chartered in other states, depended chiefly upon New York for their sale; that the immense amount of merchandise in their warehouses had, within the same period, fallen in value at least thirty per cent.; that within a few weeks not less than twenty thousand individuals, depending upon their daily labor for their daily bread, had been discharged by their employers, because the means of retaining them were exhausted; and that a complete blight had fallen upon a community heretofore so active, enterprising, and prosperous: the errors of our rulers," they declared, "had produced a wider desolation than the pestilence which depopulated our streets, or the conflagration which laid them in ashes."

Several petitions from other commercial cities and towns, had been presented to the president, requesting that he would summon a meeting of Congress at an early day. The president for some time declined to act on the petitions, but the suspension of specie payments by the banks, and the consequent exigency in which the financial affairs of the government was placed, finally induced him to issue his proclamation, on the 15th of May, for the convening of Congress on the first Monday in September, on account of "great and weighty matters claiming their consideration."

Previous to the suspension of specie payments by the banks, some of the friends of the president entertained a hope that he would afford some relief to the business community, by revoking the "specie circular" of the treasury department, which had been issued by order of General Jackson in July, 1836, requiring gold and silver in payments for the public lands; but in this hope they were disappointed, and it was soon evident that it was the intention of President Van Buren to carry out the designs of his predecessor in establishing a specie currency; especially in all concerns relating to the finances of the general government. According to the report of the secretary of the treasury, in December, 1836, the condition of the currency of the United States was estimated as follows at that period: bank paper in active circulation, one hundred and twenty millions of dollars; specie in active circulation, twenty-eight millions; specie in banks, forty-five millions.

The extra session, being the first, of the twenty-fifth Congress, commenced on the 4th of September, 1837, and continued forty-three days, namely, until the 16th of October. The state of parties in the house of representatives was exhibited in the choice of speaker. James K. Polk, the administration candidate, was for the second time elected to that station, receiving 116 votes, against 103 for John Bell (whig), and 5 scattering. It became evident, however, that there was in the administration ranks a small section, whose views respecting the currency did not coincide with those of the president, but were favorable to banking institutions and the preservation of the credit system, as applied to the transaction of the business community. Hence arose a third party, which exercised considerable influence in many parts of the Union, and, adopting the name of "conservatives," eventually became an ally of the whigs, in their opposition to the administration. In consequence of the course of these conservatives, some of the measures recommended by the president were defeated in the house of representatives at this and the following session.

The recommendations of the president in his message to Congress at the extra session, promised no relief to the people. Indeed, the opinion that document distinctly expressed was, that the national legislature could do nothing to mitigate the evils which existed, and which, it stated, were occasioned by the unwise conduct of the business community; that it was not the duty or design of the general government to interfere in such cases. The doctrine was advanced in the message, that all the government could do or was designed to do, was to take care of itself, and could not be expected to legislate with reference to the monetary concerns of the people. The actual condition of the government, in relation to its financial concerns, was stated with great clearness and precision, and the reasons were given which rendered the call of the extra session absolutely necessary.

The most important recommendation of the message, was the measure which received from its opponents the name of the sub-treasury scheme. By the friends of the administration it was called the independent treasury. As the funds of the government were in the possession of banks, all of which refused to pay specie, and the use of their circulating notes was a violation of the act, or resolution, of Congress, passed in 1816; and the president having been elected under a pledge against a national bank, he recommended that the treasury of the United States should be kept by public officers, and that there should be an entire and total separation of the business and funds of the government from those of the banks

The announcement of this scheme by the administration, caused great excitement in Congress and among the people. It was very unfavorably received by the political friends of the president, in the different states, who were interested in banks. It was represented by the opposition, whigs and conservatives, as a direct attack upon the banks and what was called the credit system. They insisted, that if the president's views were carried out, the prostration and destruction of all banks would be inevitable, and that finally a metallic currency would alone constitute the circulating medium, which would be wholly inadequate to the exigencies of a commercial community. Another consequence which they predicted, assuming that the banks were to be destroyed, was a reduction of prices, fatal and ruinous to the debtor.*

The official paper at the seat of government, the Globe, having been zealous and active in support of the new treasury scheme, and in opposition to the banking system, the conservatives in the house of representatives opposed the election of the publishers of that paper (Messrs. Blair and Rives) as printers to the house. After several ballottings, the whigs joined the conservatives, and elected Thomas Allen, editor of the Madisonian, a conservative newspaper, printer to the house.

A bill to establish the proposed independent treasury was reported by Mr. Wright, chairman of the committee on finance, in the senate, and, after considerable discussion, passed that body by a vote of 26 ayes, to 20 noes. In opposing the measure, Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, said, that "the project was neither desirable nor practicable, nor within the constitutional power of the general government, nor just; and that it was contrary to the habits of the people of the United States, and dangerous to their liberties. He declared, that after the most deliberate and anxious consideration of which he was capable, he could conceive of no adequate remedy for the disorders which unhappily prevailed, which did not comprehend a national bank as an essential part. The great want of the country was a general and uniform currency, and a point of union, a sentinel, a regulator of the issues of the local banks; and that would be supplied by such an institution." No effort, however, was made at this time to introduce the question of a national bank, in Congress, in consequence of the well-known feelings of the president and his party against it.

The sub-treasury bill from the senate was taken up in the house of representatives, but after an excited debate it was laid on the table, by the combined vote of whigs and conservatives, ayes 120, noes 107. It was thus evident that the administration were in the minority on their favorite measure, in the popular branch of Congress. Having passed a bill postponing until January 1, 1839, the deposite with the states, of the fourth instalment of the surplus funds directed to be made with them; acts authorizing the issue of ten millions of dollars in treasury-notes, for the immediate wants of government; appropriating $1,600,000 for the suppression of Indian hostilities in Florida; extending the time of bonds for duties on imports; and providing for adjusting the claims upon the late deposite banks, with a few acts of minor importance; Congress adjourned without carrying out the wishes of either the people or the government, at this extra session.

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* Hammond.

The second session of the twenty-fifth Congress commenced on the 4th of December, 1837, and continued until the 9th of July, 1838.

The independent, or sub-treasury scheme was again pressed upon the consideration of Congress, by the president, and a bill for that purpose, similar to that proposed at the extra session, being reported in the senate, the subject underwent an elaborate discussion in that body. The bill was ably sustained by Senators Wright, Benton, and others, and opposed also with ability by Mr. Clay, Mr. Webster, and other whig senators. Mr. Clay's speech was of great length, and he endeavored to establish the following proposition: "First, that it was the deliberate purpose and fixed design of the administration of General Jackson to establish a government bank—a treasury bank—to be administered and controlled by the executive department. Secondly, that, with that view, and to that end, it was its aim and intention to overthrow the whole banking system, as existing in the United States when that administration came into power, beginning with the bank of the United States, and ending with the state banks. Thirdly, that the attack was first confined, from considerations of policy, to the bank of the United States; but that after its overthrow was accomplished, it was then directed, and has since been continued, against the state banks. Fourthly, that the present administration, by its acknowledgments, emanating from the highest and most authentic source, has succeeded to the principles, plans, and policy, of the preceding administration, and stands solemnly pledged to complete and perfect them. And fifthly, that the bill under consideration (the sub-treasury plan) was intended to execute the pledge, by establishing, upon the ruins of the late bank of the United States, and the state banks, a government bank, to be managed and controlled by the treasury department, acting under the commands of the president of the United States."

Among those who supported the sub-treasury bill in the senate, was Mr. Calhoun, of South Carolina, who, with the South Carolina members in the house of representatives, now sustained the administration. Mr. Preston, the senatorial colleague of Mr. Calhoun, acted with the opposition.

The sub-treasury bill passed the senate, but was rejected in the house of representatives on the 25th of June, 1838, by 125 to 111 votes. This plan of finance was proposed originally in Congress in 1834, by Mr. Gordon, of Virginia, but was then opposed by the friends of the administration, and rejected. In the present instance, as at the extra session, the whigs and conservatives combined against the bill.

A bill was passed at this session granting pre-emption rights to settlers on the public lands. Other important acts passed were the following: to establish the territory of Iowa; granting land for opening a canal in the territory of Wisconsin; to encourage the introduction and promote the cultivation of tropical fruits in the United States; making appropriations for lightboats and beacons, and making surveys; authorizing the printing of the Madison papers; to provide for certain harbors, and the improvement of navigation of certain rivers in Florida; making an appropriation for the Cumberland road; appropriating money also for suppressing Indian hostilities, and for fortifications.

Mr. Preston, whig senator from South Carolina, introduced, in the senate, resolutions in favor of the annexation of Texas to the United States, but they did not receive favorable action at this time. The independence of that republic had been recognised by the United States in the last year of General Jackson's administration.

In June, 1838, Mr. Dickerson resigned the office of secretary of the navy, and James K. Paulding, of New York, was appointed in his place.

During this year serious disturbances against the colonial government occurred in Canada, and many of the citizens of the United States, on the northern frontiers prepared to join them. President Van Buren, therefore, issued a proclamation, calling upon all the persons engaged in the schemes of invasion of Canada, to abandon the design; and warning all those who had engaged in these criminal enterprises, if persisted in, that, "to whatever condition they may be reduced, they must not expect the interference of the United States government, in any form, on their behalf, but would be left, reproached by every virtuous fellow-citizen, to be dealt with according to the policy and justice of that government whose dominions they have, in defiance of the known wishes and efforts of their own government, and without the shadow of justification or excuse, nefariously invaded."

Although there were many individuals largely interested in banks, who continued in good faith to support the democratic party, and the administration of Mr. Van Buren, yet it was generally believed that the great mass of the banking interest was brought to bear against the administration. The state banks, in many instances, had sustained, with all their influence, General Jackson, in his veto of the United States bank bill, and in the transfer which he made of the deposites from the national to the state banks; but when President Van Buren recommended the removal of the deposites from the state banks, and the establishment of the independent treasury, it was quite another matter.*

The agitation of the currency question, and a combination of causes adverse to the administration, resulted in a great political change at the elections in the important state of New York, in 1837 and 1838. The influence of these elections in the native state of the president, which had previously sustained him by large majorities, could not fail to act upon other states; and it was soon evident, notwithstanding partial successes of the democratic party in some of the states, that the administration was gradually declining in popularity.

The twenty-fifth Congress held its third session from the 3d of December, 1838, to the expiration of its term, on the 3d of March, 1839. But few acts of general interest were passed. Among them may be named an act for preventing and suppressing Indian hostilities; this law related particularly to the difficulties with the Seminole tribe in Florida. The war with these Indians was continued during several years, and large sums were expended in maintaining it. In 1836, one million and a half of dollars were appropriated to prosecute that unfortunate contest. In January, 1837, two millions more were voted by Congress for the purpose. These appropriations were made before the retirement of General Jackson. At the extra session, in October, 1837, and in the two succeeding sessions, large amounts were again appropriated. When the difficulty arose with the Seminoles, President Jackson supposed that it would soon be terminated. And no one, at that time, had any reason to suppose that it would continue for years, and have cost the government eight or ten millions.†

Another act was passed at this session, locating and providing for the Seminole Indians, who had been removed from Florida; another abolishing imprisonment for debt in certain cases. The aspect of our relations with Great Britain was at this time threatening, in consequence of the difficulty respecting the northeast boundary. Congress, therefore, passed an act giving to the president additional powers for the defence of the United States.

During the summer of 1839, President Van Buren visited the state of New York, for the first time since his election. He travelled through the state, stopping at the principal cities and villages. He was received with public honors, and followed by processions of citizens, civil and military. In an address made to him by Mr. Edmonds, formerly a state senator, upon his arrival at New York, he made some remarks which rendered it necessary for Mr. Van Buren to speak of political parties and his own political friends, and of course to express his strong attachment to those friends. This gave occasion to the opposition to represent, that instead of coming on a visit to the whole people, as a president of the United

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* Hammond.

† Bradford.

States ought to do, he was on an electioneering tour, for the sole purpose of stimulating his friends to more active exertions, and of recruiting their dilapidated ranks by proselytes whom he was to gain from his political opponents. Hence everything he did, and every word he uttered, was the subject of the most critical and jealous scrutiny.*

In the election of members of the twenty-sixth Congress, there had been a considerable gain for the whigs and conservatives, and, until the fall of 1839, it appeared probable that there would be an opposition majority in the house of representatives. But the friends of the administration made a desperate rally in a few of the last states which chose representatives to the twenty-sixth Congress, and succeeded in returning a small majority of the members elect, leaving out of view five of the six representatives from the state of New Jersey, whose seats were contested. The full returns of members elected to the house of representatives were reported to stand thus: administration 119, opposition 118, and five members from New Jersey claimed by both parties, the certificates of election being given to the whig candidates, and their seats contested by the administration candidates. In this situation of affairs, intense interest was felt, throughout the country, with regard to the meeting of Congress.

The twenty-sixth Congress met on the 2d of December, 1839. Every member elect of the house of representatives was present, except Mr. Kempshall (whig), from Monroe county, New York, who was detained by sickness in his family. On the assembling of the house, the clerk of the last house, Mr. Garland, a friend of the administration, agreeably to the usual custom, commenced calling the roll; and having called the members from the several New England states and the state of New York, and one of the six members from the state of New Jersey, who all brought the regular certificates, proposed to pass by the other five (whose rights to seats would be contested) till the members from the rest of the states should be called. This brought on a long, animated, and disorderly debate. Scenes of excitement and confusion continued until the 5th, when Mr. John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, addressed the members, and called upon them to organize, by choosing a chairman *pro tem.* Thereupon Mr. Rhett, of South Carolina, nominated Lewis Williams, of North Carolina, as chairman: he declined; when Mr. Rhett nominated John Quincy Adams, who was immediately chosen chairman *pro tem.*, and entered upon the duties of the same. The debate respecting the contested seats from New Jersey was continued from day to day till, on the 16th of December, Robert M. T. Hunter, of Virginia, an opposition member (but in favor of the subtreasury), was elected speaker on the 11th ballot. He received 119 votes, to 113 for all others. On the 17th, the members of the house of representatives were sworn, with the exception of the five disputed members from New Jersey. The whigs having the certificates of election, under the broad seal of the governor, now came forward and demanded, as their right, to be sworn, which gave rise to a new and animated debate, and on the 20th the following resolution was decided in the negative, by a vote of 112 to 116: "*Resolved,* That the representatives of the twenty-sixth Congress, now present, do advise and request the speaker to administer the oath required by law, to the five gentleman from the state of New Jersey who have presented credentials to the speaker and demand to be sworn." On the 21st the house completed its organization, by the election of a clerk; and on the 24th the president's message was delivered, just three weeks after the regular time.

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* Hammond.

A national convention of the whig party was held at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on the 4th of December, 1839, for the purpose of nominating candidates for president and vice-president of the United States. Great difference of opinion prevailed among the whigs, with respect to a suitable candidate for president, regard being especially had to the importance of nominating one upon whom the different elements of which the opposition to the administration was composed could unite with the cordiality and zeal required to be effectual.

It was the expectation of a large proportion of the whig party, especially of those who had been originally opposed to the administration of General Jackson, that Henry Clay, of Kentucky, would receive the nomination of the national convention at Harrisburg, as the opposition candidate for president. Some time before the assembling of that convention, it had been proclaimed that a clear majority of the whole number of delegates had been chosen as friendly to the nomination of Mr. Clay. Yet, during the autumn of the year 1839, notwithstanding the unpopularity of the administration, the whig party met with defeats in the elections in Tennessee, Georgia, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Maine. In New Jersey they held the legislature, with a strong majority against them in the popular vote. In New York the whig majority in the state was about 4,000 on the vote for senators, against 10,000 in 1838, and 15,000 in 1837. In North Carolina the whig triumph was not of a decisive character. These results showed that the opposition were losing in 1839 the advantages they had gained in 1837 and 1838, and this cast a shadow over the spirits of the reflecting friends of Mr. Clay. Under these circumstances, many of those friends began to doubt the expediency of placing him in nomination in opposition to Mr. Van Buren; particularly when it was known that the friends of the administration were desirous that Mr. Clay should be the opposition candidate. In that case, inasmuch as they believed that gentleman could not concentrate the opposition vote in his favor, they anticipated an easy victory for the democratic party at the approaching election.

Mr. Clay himself seemed to acquiesce in the doubts expressed by some of his friends, as to his own comparative strength with the whig party. In the summer of 1839, he made a visit, for health and recreation, to the country on the lakes, Canada, and the state of New York. At the city of Buffalo he yielded to the request of his friends, to address the people on the state of public affairs. Alluding to the approaching nomination and election of president, he said: "To correct past evils and to avert impending dangers, we see no effectual remedy, but in a change of our rulers. The opposition constitutes the majority—unquestionably the majority—of the nation. A great responsibility, therefore, attaches to it. If defeated, it will be defeated by its own divisions, and not by the merits of the principles of its opponents. These divisions are at the same time our weakness and their strength.

"Are we not, then, called upon, by the highest duties to our country, to its free institutions, to posterity, and to the world, to rise above all local prejudices, and personal partialities, to discard all collateral questions, to disregard every subordinate point, and, in a genuine spirit of compromise and concession, uniting, heart and hand, to preserve for ourselves the blessings of a free government, wisely, honestly, and faithfully administered, and as we received them from our fathers, to transmit them to our children? Should we not justly subject ourselves to eternal reproach, if we permitted our differences about mere men to bring defeat and disaster upon our cause? Our principles are imperishable, but men have but a fleeting existence, and are themselves liable to change and corruption during its brief continuance.

"If my name creates any obstacle to union and harmony, away with it, and concentrate upon some individual more acceptable to all branches of the opposition. What is a public man worth, who is not ready to sacrifice himself for the good of his country? I have unaffectedly desired retirement; I yet desire it, when, consistently with the duties and obligations which I owe, I can honorably retire."

In the ranks of the opposition to the administration were many who had formerly supported the election of General Jackson, and still retained a prejudice against Mr. Clay; there were also in the same ranks, large numbers of anti-masons who were unwilling to support a mason for the presidency, and Mr. Clay had been a member of the lodge; then came the anti-tariff whigs in the southern states, and the squatters on the public lands, at the west; with both of which classes Mr. Clay was unpopular, from the measures advocated by him in Congress being adverse to their views and feelings. In view of these circumstances, and believing that to command success the whig candidate for the presidency must receive the united support of the different branches of the opposition, many of the leading whigs exerted themselves to prevent the nomination of Mr. Clay. It was even charged by those friends who were anxious for his nomination, that intriguers were busy, before the meeting of the convention, by correspondence and otherwise, in circulating false reports with regard to

Mr. Clay's unpopularity, and thus influencing the election of delegates and their action in the convention.

On the meeting of the convention at Harrisburg, three names were presented as candidates for the nomination of a president of the United States, namely, Henry Clay, of Kentucky, General William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, and General Winfield Scott, of the United States army; all three of whom were natives of Virginia. Twenty-two states were represented in the convention, and on an informal ballot *per capita*, it was found that Mr. Clay had a decided plurality, but neither of the candidates had a clear majority of the delegates. It was then determined to vote by states, each state to be entitled to as many votes in the convention as it had electoral votes. On the first ballot, 103 votes were given to Clay, 94 to Harrison, and 57 to Scott; after which, each delegation compared views, and endeavored to ascertain which of the three candidates had the best prospects of success, if nominated. The result of their inquiries was a decided preponderance of chances in favor of General Harrison, and, after being in session three days, the convention took a final ballot, when Harrison received 148 votes, Clay 90, and Scott 16. William H. Harrison was therefore declared duly nominated as the whig candidate for president. John Tyler, of Virginia, was unanimously nominated for vice-president. Mr. Tyler had been a candidate for the same office in 1836; was now a member of the convention, and had been anxious for the nomination of Mr. Clay.

Those friends of Mr. Clay in the convention who had adhered to him as the best candidate, expressed their cordial concurrence in the decision in favor of General Harrison. A letter from Mr. Clay to one of the delegates was read, in which he remarked, that "if the deliberation of the convention should lead them to the choice of another, as the candidate of the opposition, far from feeling any discontent, the nomination would have his best wishes, and receive his cordial support."

The example of Mr. Clay was followed throughout the Union, notwithstanding the first feelings of disappointment with which the decision of the convention was received by many. The nomination of Harrison and Tyler was everywhere popular, and united in its support the entire force of the opposition.

The national democratic convention, consisting of about 250 members, from twenty-one states, met at Baltimore on the 5th of May, 1840. Mr. Van Buren was unanimously nominated for president, and the convention resolved to make no nomination for vice-president, leaving each state to make its own nomination of a candidate for that office. The principal candidates nominated in the different states for vice-president, were the incumbent, Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, and James K. Polk, of Tennessee.

The early part of the first session of Congress was taken up, in the house, in discussions respecting the contested seats of the New Jersey members. That matter being settled, by admitting the democratic claimants to the seats, the house proceeded to the consideration of the subjects submitted to them by the president. Long and able debates took place on the bill for establishing an "independent treasury," which had been twice rejected by the last Congress. It was now passed, toward the close of the session, and was signed by the president on the 4th of July, 1840, when it became a law. A bankrupt law being much called for by the trading community, a bill was introduced at this session, and passed the senate, but was laid on the table in the house of representatives, 101 to 89.

But few laws of general interest were passed at this session. Appropriations for fortifications, and for the usual expenditures of government, were made. An act was passed to refund to Matthew Lyon the amount, with interest, paid by him as a fine for violating the sedition law.

Some changes took place in the cabinet, in addition to those already mentioned. In 1838 Benjamin F. Butler resigned as attorney-general, and Felix Grundy, of Tennessee, was appointed in his place; in 1839 Mr. Grundy resigned, and Henry D. Gilpin, of Pennsylvania, received the appointment in his place; Amos Kendall resigned the office of postmaster-general, and John M. Niles, of Connecticut, was appointed in his place, on the 25th of May, 1840.

The elections for state officers in several of the states, during the summer and autumn of 1840, indicated the success of the whigs at the approaching presidential election. The contest of the two great parties at the latter, was the most exciting and arduous ever witnessed in the United States. Electoral tickets in favor of the re-election of Mr. Van Buren were formed in every state in the Union, and the whigs also nominated electors in every state except South Carolina.

A third party, in favor of the abolition of slavery, had also been for some time organized, and now nominated as a candidate for president, James G. Birney, of Michigan.

The result of the election was the success of the whig candidates, Harrison and Tyler, by a large majority in the electoral colleges and on the popular vote. The electoral votes stood, for president, Harrison 234, Van Buren, 60; for vice-president, Tyler 234, R. M. Johnson 48, L. W. Tazewell 11, James K. Polk 1.

The second session of the twenty-sixth Congress was held from the 7th of December, 1840, to the 3d of March, 1841, when their term expired. Very few public acts of interest or importance were passed at this session. Appropriations were made for certain fortifications, and for Indian affairs; and an act was passed authorizing another issue of treasury-notes. A bankrupt law was again discussed, but was not definitely acted upon.

In the senate Mr. Clay offered the following resolution, to test the disposition of the administration party to conform to the expression of public opinion, by repealing the sub-treasury law: "*Resolved*, That the act entitled, 'an act for the collection, safe-keeping, transfer, and disbursement of the public revenues,' ought to be forthwith repealed, and that the committee on finance be instructed to report a bill accordingly." This resolution was rejected by the senate, and the repeal of the law was left for the new administration.

The public expenditures during this administration greatly exceeded those of any preceding four years, since the war with Great Britain, exclusive of the public debt and the Florida Indian war. Public agents were multiplied, and increased compensation, in many cases, allowed them for their services. Large sums were lost to the national treasury by the defalcation of public officers, and the failure of deposite banks.

The character of Mr. Van Buren's administration is, of course, differently estimated by his countrymen, according to their political bias or preferences, and our readers may form their own estimate, from a perusal of the preceding brief narrative of the leading political events of this exciting period.

Although a majority of the house of representatives, in the twenty-fifth Congress, was opposed to his administration, or some of his leading measures, Mr. Van Buren did not exercise the veto power during the four years of his presidential term.

A writer in the Democratic Review for April, 1840, makes the following comparison of this with former democratic administrations:—

"The great event of President Jackson's administration was the contest with the bank of the United States, and its destruction as a federal institution—that of Madison's was the war—while Jefferson's was rather a general revolution of the anti-democratic spirit and policy of the preceding administration, than marked by any single salient point of such historical prominence as to give its character and name to the period. The great event of Mr. Van Buren's administration, by which it will hereafter be known and designated, is the *divorce of bank and state*, in the fiscal affairs of the federal government, and the return, after half a century of deviation, to the original design of the constitution."

The same writer informs us that Mr. Van Buren remarked to a friend, previous to writing his message recommending the independent treasury: "We can not know how the immediate convulsion may result, but the people will, at all events, eventually come right, and posterity at least will do me justice. Be the present issue for good or for evil, it is for posterity that I will write this message."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

The family of Harrison is one of the most ancient and honorable in the history of Virginia. Among the early settlers of the colony was a lineal descendant of that General Harrison who bore a distinguished part during the civil wars of England, in the army of the Commonwealth.

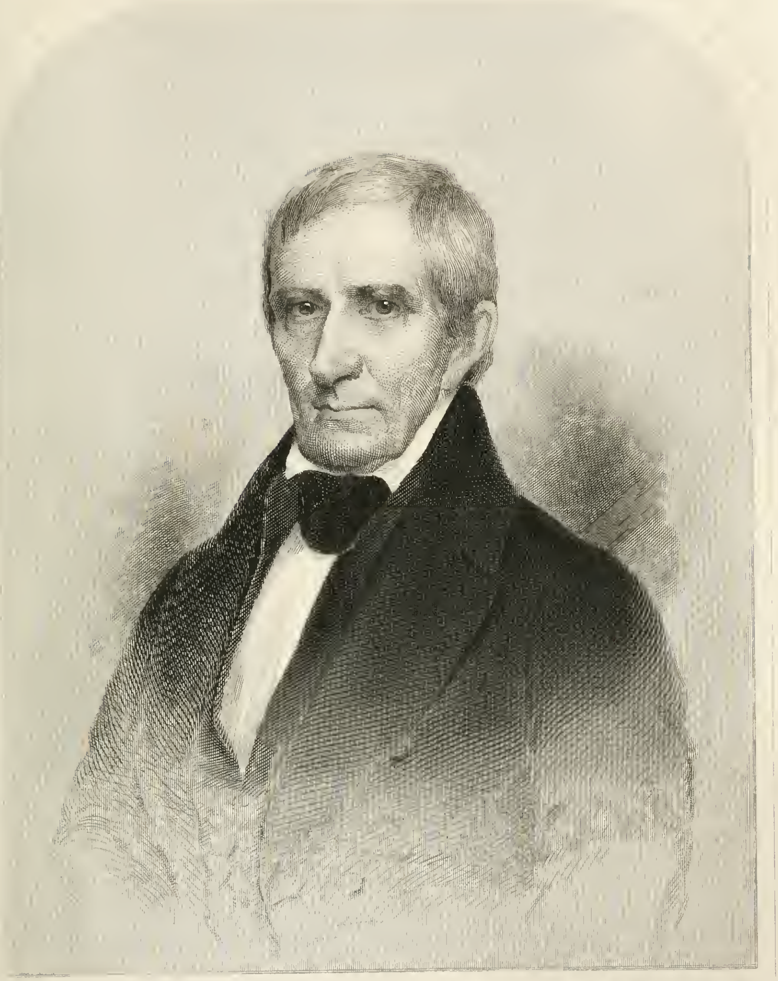
Benjamin Harrison (of the same stock), the father of the subject of this memoir, was one of the signers of the declaration of independence, and among the most prominent of the illustrious men of his eventful day, having filled the executive chair of the "Old Dominion" at a period when moral daring and personal fearlessness were essential to the incumbent of that station. He was previously an active and influential member, both of the house of burgesses in Virginia, and of the continental Congress. Of the former body he was repeatedly chosen speaker, and in the latter, in June, 1776, he introduced the resolution which declared the independence of the colonies, and on the following fourth of July, as chairman of the committee of the whole, he reported the more formal declaration to which his signature is affixed. Governor Harrison died in 1791, after the most eminent public services, and the expenditure of an ample fortune in the cause of his country.

William Henry Harrison, the third and youngest son of the preceding, and ninth president of the United States, was born on the 9th of February, 1773, at Berkeley, on the James river, in Charles city county, Virginia. On the death of his father, he was placed under the guardianship of his intimate friend, Robert Morris, of Pennsylvania, the great financier of the revolution. Young Harrison was educated at Hampden Sidney college, in his native state, and afterward applied himself to the study of medicine as a profession. But before he had completed his course of studies as a physician, the barbarities of the Indians upon the western frontiers excited a feeling of indignation throughout the country. Harrison resolved to give up his profession and join the army raised for the defence of the Ohio frontier. His guardian, Mr. Morris, attempted to dissuade him from his purpose, but his resolution was not to be shaken, and on communicating with General Washington, that distinguished man cordially approved of the patriotic determination of the son of his deceased friend and associate.

At the age of nineteen, Harrison received from President Washington the commission of ensign in a regiment of artillery, and joined his corps at Fort Washington, on the Ohio, in 1791. A reinforcement was ordered to march for Fort Hamilton, on the Miami, a task which it required no ordinary degree of courage to accomplish, as they had to pass through forests infested by hordes of the hostile tribes, and Harrison was chosen to the command of the body of men forming the escort. The dexterity and skill which he displayed in the prosecution of this arduous duty, gained for him the approbation of his commanding officer, General St. Clair. He rapidly gained the entire confidence of his officers, and in 1792 was promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

During the following year Harrison joined the new army under the command of General Anthony Wayne, an officer whose intrepidity and daring impetuosity, accompanied at the same time with consummate skill, during the war of the revolution, obtained for him the title of "Mad Anthony." It was a period, indeed, worthy of such a man, for the repeated successes and incursions of the savage enemy had not only infused among the people generally, but even throughout the army itself, such terror and dread of these merciless foes, as greatly to paralyze their energies, and to render the duties of the commander extremely arduous and difficult. The instructions, indeed, which were forwarded by Congress to General Wayne, contained the following ominous expression: "Another defeat would prove inexpressibly ruinous to the reputation of the government;" and consequently, in such a critical juncture, every available facility was rendered him. On the 25th of May, 1792, he repaired to Pittsburg, which was selected as the place of rendezvous. The newly-organized army consisted of a major-general, four brigadier-generals, with their respective staffs, the commissioned officers, and over five thousand rank and file; which was designated, "the legion of the United States." Although this collective force had the effect of partially restoring the spirit and energy of the soldiers, they continued to desert in considerable numbers. To remedy this evil, General Wayne applied himself at all intervals of leisure, to the disciplining of his troops, with unremitting assiduity. Thus it must be obvious, that the early military career of Harrison had but few attractions for those who were not, like him, actuated solely by the true spirit of generous patriotism.

Finding all amicable negotiations with the Indians unavailing, no alternative was left to General Wayne but to adopt the most rigid and decisive



W. H. Harrison

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measures; accordingly we find him breaking up his winter quarters, about the end of April, 1793, and transporting his army in boats down the Ohio to Fort Washington, an outpost situated upon the site now occupied by the city of Cincinnati. Having at length received instructions from the secretary of war to commence active operations, he left Fort Washington in October, 1793, and advanced with his army along the southwestern branch of the Miami, where he took up his position, and erected fortifications. To this post he gave the name of Greenville, and here the army went into winter quarters. General Wayne sent a detachment to take possession of the ground on which General St. Clair and his army had been defeated by the Indians two years before. Harrison volunteered for the service, and was accepted by the commander.

The battle-ground was taken possession of by the troops, and a fortification erected, to which the name of Fort Recovery was given. The bones of the soldiers slain on the fatal 4th of November, 1791, were collected, and interred with military honors. The artillery lost on that occasion were recovered; and on the return of the troops from the expedition, the name of Lieutenant Harrison, among others, was mentioned by General Wayne, in his general order of thanks to the officers and men for their gallant conduct on the occasion.

On the 30th of June, 1794, a fierce attack was made by large numbers of the Indians, upon the newly-constructed works at Fort Recovery; they were, however, repeatedly repulsed, and the arrival of a body of militia from Kentucky enabled General Wayne to force them to retreat with great loss.

Being reinforced by a body of mounted volunteers from Kentucky. General Wayne advanced seventy miles to Grand Glaize, in the very heart of the Indian territory. Here he erected a fort which he called Defiance, at the confluence of the Maumee and Au Glaize rivers.

Agreeably with his instructions, General Wayne renewed his overtures of peace, which again being rejected by the Indians, he prepared to bring them to a decisive settlement. In the heroic engagement or battle of the Maumee rapids, which ensued, on the 20th of August, 1794, the consummate skill of the general, as well as the valor of his troops, were alike resplendent with the important consequences which resulted from the action. In the official account of this battle, we also find the name of Lieutenant Harrison complimented by the commander-in-chief as his "faithful and gallant aid-de-camp," in having "rendered the most essential service by communicating his orders in every direction, and for his conduct and bravery, in exciting the troops to press for victory." The Indians now proposed to capitulate with General Wayne, and the result was, a treaty of peace was concluded, by which the United States obtained cessions of considerable tracts of land, as well as secured tranquillity to the border settlements. The news of Wayne's victory had a favorable effect upon our pending negotiations in London, and was supposed to have enabled the American special minister, Mr. Jay, to secure the assent of Lord Grenville to the surrender to the United States of all the forts held and occupied by the British in the northwest, within the jurisdiction of our government. Thus undisputed possession of the territory northwest of the Ohio was obtained, and emigration to that country received a new and favorable impulse.

Not long after the close of this campaign, Harrison was promoted to the rank of captain; and as an additional proof of the confidence reposed in his discretion and ability, by General Wayne, he was placed in command of Fort Washington. While at this place (where Cincinnati now stands), being now about twenty-one years of age, he married the daughter of John Cleves Symmes, the founder of the Miami settlements. "She has been," says Mr. Hall in his memoir, "the faithful companion of this distinguished patriot during the various perils and vicissitudes of his eventful life, and still lives to witness the maturity of his fame, and the honors paid him by a grateful country."

He continued in the army till the close of the year 1797, when, soon after the death of General Wayne, as peace had been ratified with the Indians, and the opportunity to serve his country in the field appeared to exist no longer, he resigned his commission. Scarcely had this event transpired, than he was appointed, by President Adams, secretary and *ex officio* lieutenant-governor of the northwestern territory. While in this station, in October, 1799, he was elected, by the legislature of that territory, their first delegate to Congress. He was at this time about twenty-six years of age, and took his seat in the house of representatives, at the first session of the sixth Congress, in 1799. Previous to proceeding to the seat of government, he resigned his office of secretary of the territory. In 1798, the northwestern territory contained five thousand white male inhabitants, and was admitted as a matter of right to the second grade of government, provided for in the ordinance of 1787. At that time great unanimity prevailed in the territory on political questions; though the states were rent, and almost torn asunder, by party strife. The election of the elder Adams had met with general approbation among the people of the territory, and resolutions had been passed at popular meetings to sustain his administration, against the encroachments of France. An address was adopted by the legislature of 1799, to John Adams, president of the United States, approving of his administration. But few individuals were to be found who then advocated the election of Mr. Jefferson against Mr. Adams. Harrison having early imbibed democratic opinions, was one of the few who preferred Jefferson. His election as delegate to Congress was not effected by a party vote; the same legislature which adopted the address to Mr. Adams with only five dissenting votes, elected Harrison by eleven votes, against ten for Arthur St. Clair, Jr.

Though he represented the territory but one year in Congress, Harrison obtained some important advantages for his constituents. He introduced a joint resolution to subdivide the surveys of the public lands, and to offer them for sale in small tracts; he succeeded in getting that measure through both houses, in opposition to the interest of speculators who were, and who wished to be, the retailers of land to the poorer class of the community. His proposition became a law, and was hailed as the most beneficent act that Congress had ever done for the territory. It put it in the power of every industrious man, however poor, to become a freeholder, and to lay a foundation for the future support and comfort for his family. At the same session, he obtained a liberal extension of time for the pre-emptioners in the northern part of the Miami purchase, which enabled them to secure their farms, and eventually to become independent and even wealthy.*

Congress, at that session, divided the northwestern territory, by establishing the new territory of Indiana, of which Harrison was appointed governor. He also received the appointment of superintendent of Indian affairs, and resigned his seat in Congress.

The new territory of Indiana then included not only the present state of Indiana, but those of Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The seat of government was at Vincennes, a village on the Wabash. This large extent of territory, however, contained but a scanty population, and therefore according to the laws of the United States, the executive authority of the territorial government was very extensive. The governor possessed the power of negativing bills passed by the territorial legislature, of enforcing the laws, of the appointment of magistrates, of making townships, confirming grants of lands, and other equally onerous duties; which rendered the office one of peculiar and important responsibility. To one of less rigid integrity and scrupulous regard for the public interest, the opportunity was offered for much personal aggrandizement, and the acquisition of great wealth; but this, it is well known, was never dreamed of by the individual who then occupied the trust. He never availed himself of the opportunity to enhance his own private interests, directly or indirectly; and his honor and disinterested integrity were not even suspected.

Besides being superintendent of Indian affairs, he was made commander-in-chief of the militia, and all the officers below the rank of general received their commissions from him. In 1803, Mr. Jefferson appointed him sole commissioner for treating with the Indians. By virtue of this authority, Harrison negotiated, in 1804, a treaty with the Sacs and Foxes, establishing amicable relations with those tribes, and obtaining the cession of the largest tract of country ever yielded by the Indians at one time since the settlement of America, consisting of upward of fifty millions of acres of the valuable region between the river Illinois and the Mississippi, with a northern boundary stretching from the head of Fox river to a point on the Wisconsin, thirty-six miles above its mouth. Considerable tracts of land between the Ohio and the Wabash, and extending from Vincennes westward to the Mississippi, were likewise purchased by annuities, from the Delaware and Miami Indians.

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* Judge Burnet's Letters.

Such was the high estimation with which his conduct as governor was regarded, that for a period of thirteen years, at the termination of every successive term of office, he was reappointed at the earnest solicitation of the people of the territory, and with the public expression of the most flattering approbation on the part of the president of the United States; and this, notwithstanding the changes in the administration—his first appointment having been made by Mr. Adams, his second and third by Mr. Jefferson, and the fourth by Mr. Madison.

During the year 1806, the plans of the general government for the civilizing and conciliating the Indian tribes, were entirely frustrated by the intrigues of the two celebrated chiefs of the Shawnee tribe, Tecumseh, and his brother, the Prophet. The aim of these chiefs was, to induce all the surrounding tribes to form a common league against the United States, for the purpose of preventing the settlements of the whites from being extended farther west, and by making a simultaneous attack on the frontier settlements, to expel the whites from the valley of the west. The American government was informed that British emissaries from Canada were employed in forming alliances with the most powerful chiefs, and fomenting their hostility against the people of the United States.

A variety of circumstances invested the Prophet with a prodigious influence over the tribes; he is said, indeed, to have possessed the faculty of appealing to them more eloquently and gracefully than almost any other Indian. He resorted to every imposture and stratagem of which even an Indian is capable, for the furtherance of his project; asserting, among other absurdities, that he possessed the power of preventing the bullets of the enemy from taking effect upon his adherents.

In the course of the subsequent year, Governor Harrison received intelligence of the hostile demonstration of the congregated tribes; in consequence of which he sent a messenger to the Shawnees, strongly reprehending their conduct, and warning them to refrain from further listening to the fatal instructions of the Prophet. The deluded and superstitious Indians, however, disregarding the admonition, continued to collect in great numbers in the vicinity of Fort Wayne, and having entirely neglected their cornfields, they soon began to find themselves in a state bordering upon starvation. Again, in the hope of conciliating them, the governor, with his accustomed humanity and policy, ordered them supplies forthwith from the public stores.

The Prophet had now selected as his residence, a spot situated on the upper part of the Wabash, called Tippecanoe, where his infatuated followers soon rejoined him. In July he visited the governor, when, with a cunning and duplicity common to his race, he loudly protested against the evils of war and the use of spirituous liquors, and affected the greatest desire for amity with the Americans. Governor Harrison was, however, too shrewd to be thus imposed upon by these specious pretences, and in his reply told him, that he might come forward and exhibit any title he might have to the lands transferred by the treaty, and that if it was found to be just and equitable, they would be restored, or an ample equivalent given for them. But the results of the interview proved anything but satisfactory to the absurd requirements of the Prophet, as he claimed all the lands that had formerly belonged to the several tribes, and insisted that their disposal could not have been valid but with the consent of all the tribes in common. Accordingly, he redoubled his exertions for the concentration of the western tribes, studiously guarding his movements from the governor, lest he should become apprized of his intentions. He had about him, at this ime, one thousand warriors, and these continued to commit the most atrocious deeds of depredation along the frontier, till at length even the governor's house was scarcely considered secure from their hostile attacks.

In September, 1809, a council was convened at Fort Wayne, at which Governor Harrison negotiated with the Miamies, Delawares, Pottawatomies, and Kickapoos, for purchasing a large tract of country on both sides of the Wabash, extending along that river more than sixty miles above Vincennes. Tecumseh, who was at this time absent on a visit to some distant tribes, expressed, on his return, great dissatisfaction, and threatened the lives of some of the chiefs who had concluded the treaty. On hearing this, the governor invited him to come to Vincennes, with the direction that he should not be allowed to bring with him more than thirty warriors; this restriction, however, he evaded, on the pretext of suspecting some treachery on the part of the Americans, and he, instead, brought with him four hundred men, armed. This circumstance alone was sufficient to excite the suspicions of the governor, but when, added to this, the chief refused to hold the council at the appointed place, which was under the portico of the governor's house, and insisted on having it take place under some adjacent trees, his apprehensions were still greater. At this council, held on the 12th of August, 1810, Tecumseh again complained of the alleged injustice of the sale of their lands; to which the governor replied, that as the Miamies had found it to their interest to make the disposal, the Shawnees, from a distant part of the country, could have no just ground for remonstrance, or right to control them in their disposing of the property. Tecumseh fiercely exclaimed, "It is false!" and giving a signal to his warriors, they sprang upon their feet, and seizing their war-clubs and tomahawks, they brandished them in the air, ferociously fixing their eyes upon the governor. The military escort of Harrison on the occasion numbered only twelve, and they were not near his person, having been directed by him to retire for shelter from the heat, under some adjacent trees.

In this critical moment of excitement, the guard immediately advanced, and would have instantly fired upon the infuriated Indians, had it not been for the coolness and self-possession of Harrison, who, restraining them, and placing his hand upon his sword, said, in a calm, but authoritative tone, to Tecumseh: "You are a bad man: I will have no further talk with you. You must now take your departure from these settlements, and hasten immediately to your camp." On the following day, however, finding he had to deal with one so dauntless, Tecumseh solicited another interview, apologizing for his insolent affront. The precaution was now taken to defend the town, and place the governor in an attitude more likely to command their respect, by having two companies of militia in attendance. At this council the chiefs of five powerful tribes rose up, declaring their determination to stand by Tecumseh; to which the governor replied, that "their decision should be reported to the president;" but adding, that he would most certainly enforce the claims of the treaty. Still anxious, if possible, to conciliate, rather than coerce the haughty chief, he paid him a visit the next day at his camp, when, repeating in substance what has already been given, Tecumseh replied: "Well, as the great chief is to determine the matter, I hope the Great Spirit will put sense enough into his head to induce him to direct you to give up this land. It is true, he is so far off that he will not be injured by the war; he may sit still in his town and drink his wine, while you and I will have to fight it out." Shortly after this, the Shawnee chief withdrew to Tippecanoe, the residence of the Prophet, where he is said to have formed a combination of several tribes.

In July, 1811, another messenger was sent, commissioned by the governor to demand the surrender of two Pottawatomie murderers who were at Tippecanoe, but without the desired effect. Indeed, such were the lawless and daring outrages which they now committed upon the more exposed settlements on the frontier, that at length, through the earnest solicitations of the people, directions were forwarded from the federal government to the governor to march forthwith against the Prophet's town with an armed force, with this injunction, however, "to avoid hostilities of any kind or degree not absolutely necessary." These instructions rendered the situation of Harrison one of great delicacy and responsibility, being equivalent to allowing the Indians the right of commencing the action.

The receipt of the governor's authority was hailed by the settlers with great enthusiasm, as they had long suffered severely from the incursions of these ruthless marauders, and, reposing unlimited confidence in the skill and courage of their commander, they viewed the measure as the only one which could insure to them the continued possession of their property, and even of life itself. Accordingly, a hastily-assembled force, consisting of about nine hundred men, commenced its march from Fort Harrison, which was situated about sixty miles above Vincennes, on the 28th of October. After a protracted and somewhat difficult advance, through open prairies, thick woods, and deep ravines, constantly on their guard against surprise, they arrived within sight of the Indian town. Here the enemy began to appear in considerable numbers. Wearied with the fatigue of their expedition, after a brief conference, the troops encamped ; every precaution having been taken, however, to prevent surprise by the savages, as they apprehended an attack during the night.

In conformity to a general order, the troops rested in their clothes and accoutrements, their loaded muskets by their sides, and their bayonets fixed. The officers, of course, rested like the soldiers—the governor being ready to mount his horse in an instant. The night passed without a sound, and the governor and his aids rose a quarter before four, and were conversing around their fire. The new moon had risen, but afforded little light, the sky being obscured by ragged clouds, from which a drizzling rain fell at intervals. In a few minutes the signal would have been given to call the men to arms, when a blaze from Indian rifles lighted up the scene. The savage warriors had crept up as near the sentries as possible, in the darkness, intending to rush forward and despatch them without noise, and then fall upon their sleeping comrades in the camp. But one sentinel discovered what he rightly suspected to be an Indian creeping through the grass, and instantly gave him the contents of his musket. That discharge settled all doubts. Our men were started to their feet by a tremendous yell from a thousand savages, accompanied by a general volley from their rifles, and a desperate charge into the camp. But they found as warm a welcome. Every man rose on the post assigned him, with musket in hand, ready for thrust or rally. The attack centred on the sharp rear angle of the left flank, which was for some minutes exposed to a destructive fire. But this angle was promptly reinforced, and the enemy beaten back with loss, several being killed within the lines of the camp. The fires, which first served to direct the aim of the savage rifle, were promptly extinguished. But the enemy had still the advantage of shelter in the bushes and grass, and a knowledge of the ground, which rendered a charge upon them in the darkness almost certain destruction. An attempt was volunteered to rout them from their hiding-places, by a company headed by the gallant Jo. Daviess, but repulsed with loss, and among the slain was their lamented leader.

The battle still raged with desperation. The savages were bent on victory, and well organized for the contest, advancing and retreating by a rattling noise made with deers' hoofs. The governor was at every point of danger ; animating and encouraging the men where hardest pressed, ordering up companies to their support, and courting danger as if unaware of its existence. All of the troops were conducted and formed by himself. It need not be added that every man stood his ground like a hero.

The battle was fierce, but daylight at length broke on the combatants—a light most welcome to our harassed soldiers—fatal to their foes. The assailed left flank was fully strengthened, the dragoons were mounted, and, covered by them, a general charge was made upon the now baffled and dispirited enemy. The Indians gave way, and were driven into a swamp, through which the cavalry could not force their way. Repulsed in all quarters, the savages disappeared from the field, and the battle of Tippecanoe was at an end.

Such was the extraordinary influence that the Prophet retained over the minds of the infatuated savages, that they are said to have fought with desperate and unprecedented valor on the occasion, although he himself was snugly ensconced on some neighboring eminence, simply regaling his devotees with war-songs, and practising absurd incantations. Tecumseh also was, at the time, absent on a visit to some southern tribes.

The battle of Tippecanoe may unquestionably be regarded as one of the most memorable and decisive engagements ever fought with the Indians. The intrepidity and self-possession of the commander was also signally displayed on the occasion. "In the very heat of the action," says a contemporary record, "his voice was distinctly heard, giving orders in the same cool and collected manner with which he had been accustomed when on drill or parade; nor was his personal bravery less conspicuous, as he was ever foremost in leading on his troops, regardless of the peculiar danger to which he was exposed, from the circumstance of his being known to most of the Indians, and being the marked object of their hostility." In the message of the president to Congress, of December 18th, 1811, the following allusion is made, which is as highly complimentary to the conduct of the governor as it is expressive of the importance attached to the action itself, and it must have been no mean achievement which could win from the federal government such decided terms of approbation and honor. "While it is to be lamented," says Mr. Madison, "that so many valuable lives have been lost in the action which took place on the 9th ult., Congress will see with satisfaction the dauntless spirit and fortitude victoriously displayed by every description of troops engaged, as well as the collected firmness which distinguished their commander on an occasion requiring the utmost exertion of valor and discipline."*

The decisive blow which Harrison had struck against the Indian power had produced a more powerful effect than all the admonitory efforts of years had accomplished. Several of the tribes sent deputies to wait upon him with assurances of renewed amity, and a disavowal of further connexion with the hostile bands of Tecumseh. In February, 1812, intelligence that no less than eighty Indians, deputies from all the tribes who were engaged in the late hostilities, except the Shawnees, had arrived at Fort Harrison, on their way to Vincennes. Suspicion being again naturally aroused, from their numbers, that a new treachery was designed, the governor sent an expostulation, requiring them to come in less numbers and unarmed; they, however, not only delivered up their arms, but evinced the subdued deportment of men who had been taught to respect the authority of him with whom they had come to treat.

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* The legislatures of Kentucky and Indiana also recorded their resolutions regarding the conduct of Harrison in this battle. The former is as follows: "*Resolved*, That in the late campaign against the Indians on the Wabash, Governor Harrison has, in the opinion of this legislature, behaved like a hero, a patriot, and a general; and that, for his cool, deliberate, skilful, and gallant conduct in the late battle of Tippecanoe, he deserves the warmest thanks of the nation."

Meanwhile, Tecumseh had returned from the south, and notwithstanding the sad reverse which his cause had sustained during his absence, the commencement of hostilities with Great Britain found for him an ally both able and eager to second his plans, thus neutralizing in part the lasting advantages which otherwise might have accrued from the victory of Tippecanoe. He consequently again renewed his intrigues with greater activity than ever, and he caused the commencement of fresh depredations along the widely-extended borders of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, at points so distant from each other as to distract public attention and create an almost universal panic. The declaration of war with Great Britain, it will be remembered, took place on the 18th of June, 1812, and the western people suffered more than has been commonly supposed, from their almost defenceless exposure to the incursions and barbarities of the infuriated savages. Not that they were less energetic in the popular enthusiasm of the measure, for they are known never to have chosen the inane and timid counsel of preferring security to honor, while they emulated, by their deeds of noble daring, in this, the second great struggle for liberty, the stern republican virtues which their patriotic ancestors evinced in the first.

Here, again, are we called upon to notice the distinguishing preference which the whole people of the west bestowed upon General Harrison, in their nomination of him to the head of their armies at a time when the highest order of talents was, of necessity, put in requisition. Governor Harrison was repeatedly honored by consultations from the several parts of the country, and in consequence of a communication received from Governor Scott, of Kentucky, he repaired to Frankfort; and while here he suggested plans of operation which, had they been given some days earlier, would have proved of the most important service in the preservation of Detroit, but which, unhappily for the country, had not been anticipated by the government itself.

The surrender of this city, and with it the army of Hull, had exposed the vast region including western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and what are now

Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, to the enemy's ravages. About this time Governor Harrison received a communication from the war department, which informed him that he had been appointed a brigadier-general in the army of the United States. It is a matter of regret that this appointment had not been conferred upon him at an earlier period, as in that case it is more than probable that the melancholy tragedy of the massacre at the river Raisin would never have occurred. His situation again, at this time, was one of peculiar difficulty, from the paucity in the provisions and clothing of the troops; the demand for these in the Atlantic cities, from the constant failure of the contractors, causing a deficiency which often became alarming. Having received advices informing him that Fort Wayne had become infested by a body of Indians, and in danger of being reduced, Harrison's first movement was to hasten to its relief. Accordingly, on the 5th of September, he marched for that place, but finding his troops were deficient in a supply of flints—a trifling but indispensable article—he was subjected to some delay; but he reached his destination on the 9th of the same month. On the 17th he received a despatch from the president, investing him with the command of the northwestern army, which then nominally amounted to about ten thousand men, undisciplined, unprovided, and scattered over a wide region; added to which he had authority to employ officers, and to draw from the public stores; which reposed in him a trust more extensive and important than was ever deputed to any officer of the United States, if we except, perhaps, Washington and Greene. The immediate objects of the campaign now committed to the sole direction of General Harrison, were the recapture of Detroit by a *coup de main*, the reduction of Malden, in Upper Canada, and the protection of the northwestern border. The point from which the principal movement upon the enemy was to be made, was the rapids of the Miami. The military arrangements extended from Upper Sandusky, on the right, to Fort Defiance, on the left. As it comes not within our province to enumerate the details of this campaign, we shall strictly confine our remarks to the movements of General Harrison, and even our notice of these will necessarily be very brief.

Harrison had scarcely reached his intended theatre of action, when he received intelligence of General Winchester's contemplated movement against the enemy; he immediately ordered a corps of three hundred men to the rapids, and on the following morning he proceeded himself to Lower Sandusky, and there found that General Perkins had also prepared to send a battalion and artillery; but owing to the delay in their transmission, from the bad condition of the roads, they failed to reach the river Raisin before the fatal disaster had occurred. Harrison now determined to proceed to the rapids, to learn personally the situation of General Winchester. In the meantime, however, a reinforcement had been despatched by Colonel Lewis, for the purpose of occupying the village of Frenchtown, and while on his way thither, General Harrison received the intelligence of the victory which had been gained on the preceding day.

He was finally enabled, on the 20th of January, to reach the camp. Hearing of Proctor's attack, he hastened with all his disposable force to the river Raisin, but was soon met by fugitives from the field of battle, from whom he ascertained the total defeat of Winchester's forces. The temerity of Winchester was the sole cause of his fall; while all that could have been done to prevent the disaster, was done by General Harrison; for had he received timely notice of the exigency of the case, his reinforcement would doubtless have terminated the action in our favor. On the 1st of February, the army having been reorganized and reinforced, their numbers now amounted to eighteen hundred men. Entertaining the confident expectation of ultimately accomplishing his purpose, General Harrison continued to make preparations with unremitting assiduity. He encamped for the winter at a fortified place which, in honor of the governor of Ohio, was called "*Camp Meigs.*" About this period Harrison, who was appointed major-general in the service of the United States, returned to Cincinnati, with the view of procuring and forwarding supplies of provisions and military stores. While engaged in the arduous duties of this campaign, he organized several minor expeditions against the Indians, in order to keep them in proper check.

Early in the spring of 1813, intelligence having been received of a contemplated expedition against Fort Meigs, by the British, accompanied by Tecumseh and six hundred warriors, General Harrison hastened back to the frontier, and immediately summoned three thousand troops from Kentucky, who reached Defiance on the 3d of May, while he himself arrived just in time to receive the enemy's attack. For five days their batteries kept up a constant shower of balls against our defences, although, through the skilful disposition of the commander, with comparatively little effect. Harrison, with his augmented forces, now made a vigorous and simultaneous attack on the enemy's batteries, and, having reduced them, preparations followed for a sortie from the fort, which resulted in triumphant success. The impetuosity of the charge proved irresistible, and, after a severe struggle, our troops drove the enemy from their batteries, notwithstanding they, including their Indian allies, nearly doubled their numbers. This action was one of the most desperate and sanguinary ever fought during the whole border war; it lasted, however, but forty-five minutes, during which time no less than one hundred and eighty were either killed or wounded of the American troops. Thus terminated the glorious defence of Fort Meigs. Harrison soon after left General Green Clay in command of the post.

The unceasing efforts of the British, and the restless spirit of Tecumseh, allowed our troops but little time to recover from their severe fatigues; for in less than two months (being early in July, 1813) the Indians assembled a formidable body of no less than five thousand warriors, and again invested the fortress. In consequence of this, Harrison had a fortification erected at Seneca town, about nine miles up the river, as a reserve for the better protection of his principal depôt at Upper Sandusky. The enemy remained but two days before the fortification, changing their route for Lower Sandusky. On the evening of the 29th, the general received information that the siege of Fort Meigs had been raised; it was of the utmost importance, therefore, that all the troops within reach should be immediately concentrated for the protection of the principal point of defence at Upper Sandusky. The enemy demanded the surrender of the fort, which being refused by its commander, Colonel Crogan, a cannonade was opened, after which they attempted an assault, but being met by a galling fire of musketry, they were repulsed with great loss, and obliged to make a precipitate retreat. On the 18th of August, Commodore Perry, with his fleet, arrived off Sandusky bay, and shortly afterward his celebrated action was fought, which so gloriously resulted in the capture of the enemy's whole fleet. Harrison, meanwhile, collected together his troops, and while Colonel Johnson marched for his station by way of the river Raisin, the general embarked on the 20th of September, with two brigades, for Bass island.

On the 27th the army again embarked, and made a descent upon the Canada shore. Surrounded by his gallant troops, General Harrison now proudly stood upon the ruined breastworks of Malden, from which destruction had been poured upon the frontier, and whence the firebrand and tomahawk of the Indian had gone forth in the work of desolation. In his despatches to the war department, Harrison thus writes: "I will pursue the enemy to-morrow, although there is little probability of overtaking him, as he has upward of one thousand horses, and we have not one in the army." He proceeded, accordingly, on the following day, to Sandwich, but Proctor had fled. "At a convention of the general officers, Harrison informed them," says M'Affee, "that there were but two ways of accomplishing their object; one of which was to follow him up the strait by land; the other, to embark and sail down Lake Erie to Long Point, then march hastily across by land twelve miles to the road, and intercept him." The former plan was unanimously preferred, and consequently adopted. The army rapidly advanced in pursuit of the enemy up the Thames to the Moravian towns. On the 5th of October the enemy were overtaken; Proctor's position was flanked on the left by the Thames, and his right by a swamp, which was occupied by a horde of Indians under the celebrated Tecumseh. General Harrison, on this occasion, adopted a movement which, while it insured an easy victory, evinced a high degree of military skill and promptitude of character—one division of his infantry extending in a double line from the river to the swamp, opposite to Proctor's troops, and the other placed at right angles to the first, facing the swamp, with the view of preventing the Indians from turning his left flank, and getting into the rear. Observing the enemy's troops to be in open order, that is, with intervals of three or four between the files, which can never successfully resist a charge of cavalry, Harrison instantly ordered Colonel Johnson's mounted regiment, which occupied the front, to dash through the enemy's line in column. This command was brilliantly executed, and the attempt was triumphant, for the British were at once thrown into confusion, and our men wisely taking advantage of their disorder by attacking their broken line in the rear, they were compelled to surrender their arms, and thus a splendid and almost bloodless victory was virtuously achieved, rather by the consummate skill of the general than by the energies of his troops.

The contest with the Indian allies, however, was more severe, as they advanced and poured in a continuous and galling fire, not only upon the cavalry, but also the infantry, which for some time made a great impression upon them. Suddenly, however, the voice of command which had hitherto inspired their courage was hushed: the haughty chief, Tecumseh, had fallen. The Indians, as soon as the event became known, hastily decamped, leaving about thirty of their number dead where the chief had fallen. Thus ended this decisive engagement, which, together with the brilliant victory on the adjacent lake, rescued the whole northwestern territory from the depredations of the savage, and all the accumulated horrors of war; for the Indians, finding themselves no longer sustained by the British, sued for peace, and the result was, an armistice was granted, and finally an amicable arrangement with them ratified by the general government at Washington. The loss on both sides, in the battle of the Thames, was about fifty killed and wounded, while the prisoners taken by the American troops amounted to six hundred.

This event, so important to the security and honor of the country, was hailed with universal rejoicing and gratulations, while all parties participated in the most enthusiastic encomiums upon the magnanimous and heroic conduct of him through whose talents and skill it was accomplished. In his message to Congress of the 7th of December, 1813, Mr. Madison spoke of the result as "signally honorable to Major-General Harrison, by whose military talents it was prepared." And in his speech in Congress, Mr. Cheves thus also alludes to the same subject: "The victory of Harrison was such as would have secured to a Roman general, in the best days of the republic, the honors of a triumph. He put an end to the war in the uppermost Canada."—"The blessings," said Governor Snyder, of Pennsylvania, in his message to the legislature of that state, "of thousands of women and children, rescued from the scalping-knife of the ruthless savage of the wilderness, and from the still more savage Proctor, rest on Harrison and his gallant army." Numerous other contemporaneous records might also be referred to in testimony of the nation's gratitude all of which, however, with the exception of the resolution which was adopted by both houses of Congress, it is needless to notice. This is as follows :—

"*Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the thanks of Congress be, and they are hereby, presented to Major-General William Henry Harrison, and Isaac Shelby, late governor of Kentucky, and through them to the officers and men under their command, for their gallant and good conduct in defeating the combined British and Indian forces under Major-General Proctor, on the Thames, in Upper Canada, on the fifth day of October, 1813. capturing the British army, with their baggage, camp equipage, and artillery ; and that the president of the United States be requested to cause two *gold medals* to be struck, emblematical of this triumph, and presented to General Harrison and Isaac Shelby, late governor of Kentucky."

The pacification of the northwestern border no longer requiring his services, General Harrison despatched his troops to the Niagara frontier, with the view of assisting in the operations then going on in that quarter, although this formed no part of the plan of the campaign he had to execute. On his arrival at Fort Niagara, preparations were being made for an expedition against Burlington heights ; these were, however, summarily arrested by the receipt of an order from the war department, directing him to send his troops to Sackett's Harbor, for the defence of that place. He accompanied them thither, and, having no right to command in that district, proceeded at once to Washington. In every city through which he passed he was received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of respect. He remained in Washington but a few days, being desired by the president to hasten to Ohio, as his presence there would be of important service, both as regarded the peace of the border, the filling up of the regiments intended to be raised in the western states, and other measures then in anticipation.

It will be remembered that the secretary of war at this time was General Armstrong, who, from some unknown cause, appears to have imbibed a strong prejudice against General Harrison, as, from the plan of the campaign for 1814, submitted by him to the president, it was evident that Harrison would no longer be employed in any active service. He also is known to have interfered, on more than one occasion during the winter, with the internal arrangements of the district which Harrison commanded, in contravention to all military etiquette. These circumstances, when contrasted with the almost unlimited powers confided to him by the government during the two previous campaigns, evidently prove them to have been intended as a source of mortification to Harrison ; accordingly, he tendered his resignation, which, unfortunately for the country, as Mr. Madison was absent on a visit to Virginia, was, without consulting the president, accepted at the war department. The president himself, in his reply to an appeal from Governor Shelby, is said to have expressed his great regret that he had not received the intimation earlier, as in that case the valuable services of General Harrison would have been preserved to the nation in the ensuing campaign. Thus prematurely, were the efficient military services of General Harrison brought to a close.* Not the less, however, did he continue to receive fresh tokens of confidence and esteem from Mr. Madison, for in the summer of 1814 he was appointed, in conjunction with Governor Shelby and General Cass, to treat with the Indians in the northwest, at Greenville and the old headquarters of General Wayne; and during the following year, when the treaty of Ghent provided for the pacification of several important tribes, he was placed at the head of the commission.

General Harrison was not permitted by the people to remain long in retirement. In 1816 he was elected to represent the congressional district of Ohio in which he resided, in the house of representatives of the United States. He was chosen to supply a vacancy, and also for the two succeeding years. As in almost every instance where an individual has rendered himself prominently an object of popular regard, we find his conduct at some period of his career the subject of malignity and slander, General Harrison had scarcely taken his seat at Washington when his conduct while in command of the northwestern army, was impugned; this was done by one of the contractors of the army, whose profits, by the integrity of Harrison, had suffered considerable diminution. At the instance of the general, a committee for the full investigation of the charges was appointed, of which Colonel Johnson was chairman; and after a full examination of numerous witnesses, they made a unanimous report, in which they exculpated General Harrison, in the fullest manner, from all the charges brought against him, and paid a high compliment to his patriotism, disinterestedness, and devotion to the public service. This unjust calumny produced serious injury to General Harrison, having caused the postponement of the resolution introduced into the senate for awarding to him the gold medal and the thanks of Congress; it was speedily dissipated, however, as it ultimately was adopted by the senate, and concurred in by the house, with but one dissenting vote.

While a member of the house, General Harrison assiduously labored to accomplish two great political objects; one was a reform in the militia, and the other for the relief of the veteran soldiers who had served in the revolutionary armies, as well as those who had been wounded, or otherwise disabled, in the last war with Great Britain. With respect to the former measure, he obtained the appointment of a committee, of which he was chairman, and subsequently brought in a bill; but the aversion which Congress has always displayed for any legislation upon the subject, caused its frequent postponement, till at length, on his retirement from Congress, it was finally dropped altogether, for the want of some one to sustain it. His other project, however, was crowned with success, and the numerous pensioners who received the nation's bounty always regarded General Harrison as their benefactor and friend.

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* But although his brilliant and glorious career in the field was ended, during which, for nearly a quarter of a century, he had successfully led his countrymen through every vicissitude and peril to victory, when he could no longer serve them in his military capacity, he retired into private life, too high-minded and disinterested to sacrifice his sense of duty to pecuniary considerations, and disdaining to receive emoluments for services which he could not, consistently with justice to himself, any longer fulfil.

He subsequently took a prominent part in supporting the affirmative o. the question of acknowledging the independence of the South American republics, as proposed by Mr. Clay, then speaker of the house; in whose views of a liberal public policy he generally concurred. In the debate on the conduct of General Jackson during the Seminole war, Harrison participated, censuring such acts of General Jackson as he deemed wrong, although giving him credit for patriotic motives, and defending him in those points which he considered right.

In 1819 General Harrison was elected to the senate of Ohio; and in 1824 he was chosen by the people one of the presidential electors of that state, on the ticket formed by the friends of Mr. Clay, and gave his vote for that gentleman for president. The same year, viz., in 1824, he was elected by the legislature a member of the senate of the United States, and soon after taking his seat in that body, the following year, he was appointed chairman of the military committee, in place of General Jackson, who had resigned. He supported the administration of Mr. Adams, and in 1828 was appointed by that president, minister plenipotentiary to the republic of Colombia. Having proceeded immediately upon his mission, he arrived at Bogota in December, 1828. He found the country in a state of confusion, the government little better than a despotism, and the people as lawless as they were ignorant of their rights. His reception, however, was characterized by the most flattering tokens of respect. His plain republican simplicity ultimately caused him to be suspected of favoring the liberal or opposition party, and occasioned a series of petty annoyances, rendering his situation exceedingly irksome. But he was speedily released from his embarrassment on this account, as one of the very first acts of General Jackson's administration, in 1829, was to recall him from the mission. Before leaving Colombia, but after he had become a private citizen, Harrison addressed to General Bolivar his celebrated appeal in favor of constitutional liberty, a document which has often been quoted in North and South America, and which, for its manly vigor, pure principles of republicanism, and fervid eloquence, has always been considered highly honorable to its author, and an evidence of his superior literary attainments.

On his return from Colombia, General Harrison ceased to engage himself in any active pursuits of public life, living in retirement upon his farm at North Bend, on the Ohio river, a few miles below Cincinnati. Never having sought personal aggrandizement, nor availed himself of his public situation to acquire a fortune, he had not been wealthy; he was, therefore, induced as a means of contributing to his support, to accept the office of clerk to the court of Hamilton county, where he resided, and which station, up to the time of his election to the presidency, he continued to occupy. This circumstance alone exhibits a trait in the character of General Harrison, no less ennobling than it is rare; since he not only proved himself superior to the influence of the specious yet arbitrary forms of conventional life, but he also evinced the greatness of his mind in rising superior to false pride as to selfish ambition in the service of his country.

In 1835 General Harrison was brought forward as a candidate for the presidency of the United States, as successor to General Jackson, at a time when it was generally expected that Mr. Van Buren, then vice-president, would be supported as the democratic candidate for that high office, by the friends of Jackson. Harrison was nominated by meetings of the people in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, and other states. Anti-masonic and whig conventions, and those who had supported Jackson, but now refused to vote for Van Buren, joined in sustaining the nomination of Harrison. The opposition were not, however, united in their candidate; Judge Hugh L. White was nominated and supported for the presidency, in Tennessee, Georgia, and other southern and southwestern states, while Daniel Webster received the vote of Massachusetts, and Willie P. Mangum that of South Carolina. The result of the election, which took place in 1836, showed the great popularity of General Harrison. Without any general concert among his friends, he received 73 electoral votes, and in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, the majorities for the electoral tickets in favor of Mr. Van Buren were comparatively small.

The national convention of whig delegates which assembled at Harrisburg, the seat of government of Pennsylvania, on the 4th of December, 1839, after a careful and friendly interchange of views with regard to the respective claims and prospects of the three candidates named in the convention, viz., General Harrison, Mr. Clay, and General Scott, finally awarded the nomination to Harrison. The friends of the rival opposition candidates, and all desirous to effect a change in the national administration, cordially united in the nomination; and after a contest more animated and more general than any which ever before occurred in this country, General Harrison was elected to the presidency by an overwhelming vote. He received 234 electoral votes; Mr. Van Buren 60 only. Harrison attended several of the mass meetings of the people in Ohio during the contest, and addressed them in a powerful and eloquent manner.

The elevation of General Harrison to the presidency diffused a general feeling of joy and satisfaction throughout the nation; for many even of those who had opposed his election, admitted his patriotism, and hoped for a prosperous administration of the government in the hands of one who had always proved faithful to the public trust. In February, 1841, the venerable chief left his peaceful residence at North Bend, Ohio, to proceed to the seat of the national government and take the reins of power committed to him by the voice of the people. He was received at the different cities, towns, and villages, on the route to Washington, by immense concourses of people, anxious to tender him every demonstration of respect, and showing the highest degree of enthusiasm. He arrived at Washington on the 9th of February, and was received by the mayor, aldermen, and citizens of the capital, with distinguished honor and cordial welcome. A few days afterward, he visited Richmond, Virginia, and mingled freely with the citizens; after spending a few days with his relatives residing on James river, in the vicinity of Richmond, he returned to Washington, preparatory to assuming the responsible duties of his station.

The inauguration of General Harrison as president of the United States, took place on the 4th of March, 1841. The city of Washington was thronged with people, many of whom were from the most distant states of the Union. A procession was formed, civic and military, from the quarters of the president elect to the capitol. General Harrison was mounted on a white charger, accompanied by several personal friends, and his immediate escort were the officers and soldiers who had fought under him. The scene, as described in the National Intelligencer, was highly interesting and imposing. The ladies everywhere, from the windows on each side of the avenue, waved their handkerchiefs in token of their kind feelings, and General Harrison returned their smiles and greetings with repeated bows. The enthusiastic cheers of the citizens who moved in the procession were, with equal enthusiasm, responded to by thousands of citizen spectators who lined Pennsylvania avenue, or appeared at the side windows, in the numerous balconies, on the tops of houses, or on other elevated stands.

At the capitol, the senate having been convened, by the late president, in extra session, assembled at the appointed hour, and was organized by the appointment of Mr. King, of Alabama, president *pro tem.*; after which Mr. Tyler, the vice-president elect, took the oath of office, and, on taking his seat as presiding officer, delivered a brief and appropriate address to the senate. The judges of the supreme court, the diplomatic corps, and several distinguished officers of the army and navy were present in the senate-chamber.

At twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, General Harrison entered and took the seat prepared for him in front of the secretary's table. He looked cheerful, but composed; his bodily health was manifestly good; there was an alertness in his movement which was quite astonishing, considering his advanced age, the multiplied hardships through which his frame had passed, and the fatigues he had lately undergone. After he had retained his seat for a few minutes, preparations were made for forming the line of procession to the platform prepared for the ceremony of the inauguration, erected over the front steps of the portico of the east front of the capitol.

On the platform, seats had been provided for the president elect and the chief-justice, who were placed immediately in front. On their right, seats were assigned to the diplomatic corps. Behind sat members of both houses of Congress, officers of the army and navy, and many distinguished characters from different parts of the Union; intermingled with a great company of ladies who occupied, not only the steps in the rear of the platform, but both the broad abutments of stone which support the steps on either side.

But the sight which attracted and arrested and filled the eye of the observer, was the people. They stood for hours in a solid, dense mass, variously estimated to contain, in the space before the capitol, from thirty to sixty thousand.

While patiently waiting for the arrival of the president, the mass of heads resembled some placid lake; but the instant he was seen advancing from the capitol, it suddenly resembled that same lake when a blast from the mountain has descended upon it, thrown it into tumultuous agitation, and "lifted up its hands on high." A deafening shout went up from the hearts and voices of the people. It sung welcome to the man whom the people delighted to honor, and must have met, with overwhelming power, the throbbings of his own bosom.*

When the uproar had subsided, it was succeeded by the deep stillness of expectation, and the new president forthwith proceeded to read, in accents loud and clear, his address to the nation. In its delivery, the voice of General Harrison never flagged, but to the end retained its full and commanding tone. As he touched on successive topics lying near the hearts of the people, their sympathy with his sentiments was manifested by shouts which broke forth involuntarily from time to time; and when the reading of the address was concluded, they were renewed and prolonged without restraint.

Previous to delivering the closing sentences of the address, the oath of office, tendered by Chief-Justice Taney, was taken by the president, in tones loud, distinct, and solemn, manifesting a due and a deep impression of the importance of the act; after which the president pronounced the remaining passage of his address.

The pealing cannon then announced to the country that it had a new chief magistrate. The procession was again formed; and setting out from the capitol, proceeded along Pennsylvania avenue to the mansion of the president, cheered throughout the whole route as General Harrison passed, by the immense crowds on foot, which lined the avenue and filled the doors and windows of the buildings.

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* National Intelligencer.

Nearly the whole throng of visiters accompanied the president to his new abode, and as many as possible entered and paid their personal respects to him. The close of the day was marked by the repetition of salutes from the artillery, the whole city being yet alive with a population of strangers and residents, whom the mildness of the season invited into the open air.

In the evening, the several ball-rooms and places of amusement were crowded with gentlemen and ladies attracted to Washington city by the novelty and interest of the occasion. In the course of the evening the president paid a short visit to each of the assemblies held in honor of the inauguration, and was received with the warmest demonstrations of attachment and respect.

The president immediately nominated to the senate the members of his cabinet, as follows: Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts, secretary of state; Thomas Ewing, of Ohio, secretary of the treasury; John Bell, of Tennessee, secretary of war; George E. Badger, of North Carolina, secretary of the navy; Francis Granger, of New York, postmaster-general; John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, attorney-general. These nominations were all confirmed by the senate. That body also confirmed a number of other nominations by the president, chiefly to fill vacancies; and, after electing a sergeant-at-arms, and dismissing Messrs. Blair and Rives as printers to the senate, also having elected Samuel L. Southard, of New Jersey, president *pro tem.*, the senate adjourned on the 15th of March.

The members of the diplomatic body, or foreign ministers in Washington accredited to the government of the United States, waited on the president on the 9th of March, and through Mr. Fox, the British minister, being presented by the secretary of state, made to him an appropriate address, congratulating him upon his accession to the presidency. To this address the president of the United States made the following reply:—

"SIR: I receive with great pleasure the congratulations you have been pleased to offer me, in the name of the distinguished diplomatic body now present, the representatives of the most powerful and polished nations with whom the republic which has honored me with the office of its chief magistrate has the most intimate relations—relations which I trust no sinister event will, for ages, interrupt.

"The sentiments contained in my late address to my fellow-citizens, and to which you have been pleased to advert, are those which will continue to govern my conduct through the whole course of my administration. Lately one of the people, the undisputed sovereigns of the country, and coming immediately from among them, I am enabled, with confidence, to say, that in thus acting I shall be sustained by their undivided approbation.

"I beg leave to add, sir, that, both from duty and inclination, I shall omit nothing in my power to contribute to your own personal happiness and that of the friends whom, on this occasion, you represent, as long as you may continue among us."

The other ministers, with their secretaries, and the persons attached to their respective missions, were then successively presented to the president. The Russian minister was prevented from being present, by indisposition; but on the 12th of March he was presented to the president, by the secretary of state, and to his address on the occasion, the president replied as follows:—

"I receive, sir, the congratulations which you offer me in your capacity of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the emperor of all the Russias, upon my election to the presidency of the United States, with great pleasure.

"From the epoch which introduced the United States to the world as an independent nation, the most amicable relations have existed between them and the powerful and distinguished monarchs who have successively swayed the sceptre of Russia. The presidents, my predecessors, acting in behalf and under the authority of the people, their constituents, have never failed to use every proper occasion to confirm and strengthen the friendship so auspiciously commenced, and which a mutuality of interests, render so desirable to be continued. I assure you, sir, that none of them felt the obligations of this duty more powerfully than I do; and you can not in language too strong communicate to your august monarch my sentiments on this subject. And permit me to add, that no more acceptable medium of communicating them could have been offered than that of a personage who has rendered himself so acceptable, as well to the people as to the government of the United States."

On the 17th of March, President Harrison issued his proclamation, calling an extra session of Congress, principally on account of the condition of the revenue and finances of the country, to be held on the last Monday, being the 31st day, of May ensuing.

The extra sessions of Congress called by the predecessors of General Harrison, since the organization of the government, were as follows: John Adams convened Congress on the 16th of May, 1797; Thomas Jefferson called the eighth Congress on the 17th of October, 1803, to provide for carrying the Louisiana treaty into effect, but that day was only about three weeks earlier than had been fixed by the preceding Congress; James Madison convened Congress on the 23d of May, 1809; also on the 25th of May, 1813; Martin Van Buren convened Congress on the 4th of September, 1837.

Mrs. Harrison did not accompany her husband to Washington, but remained at the homestead at North Bend, superintending the care of her numerous family, and intending to join the president at the seat of government in the course of the spring; but the family and the nation were destined soon to receive a mournful lesson upon the mutability of human affairs.

From the moment General Harrison was elected president, his heart was filled with gratitude to the people, to whom indeed he had always been devoted. Anxious to fulfil the wishes of his political friends, he received with kindness and attention the numerous applicants for office who thronged the seat of government; and although he would doubtless have been better pleased to have deferred many appointments for a time, yet a considerable number of removals were made by him, and appointments made, in compliance with the views of the cabinet, during the month of March. In the generosity of his heart, he invariably opened the doors of the president's mansion wide to the reception of his friends, and that house was the abode of hospitality and kindness. He indulged his friends to his own destruction. From sunrise till midnight, he indulgently devoted himself to his fellow-citizens who visited him, with the exception of an hour each day spent in cabinet council. It was his habit, after rising, first to peruse his bible, and then to take a walk before breakfast. And afterward, the whole day would be spent in receiving company and transacting business.

On Saturday, March 27, President Harrison, after several days previous indisposition from the effects of a cold, was seized with a chill and other symptoms of fever. These were followed by pneumonia, or bilious pleurisy, which ultimately baffled all medical skill, and terminated his virtuous, useful, and illustrious life, on Sunday morning, the 4th of April, after an illness of eight days, being a little over 68 years of age.

The last time the president spoke was at nine o'clock on Saturday night, a little more than three hours before he expired. While Doctor Worthington and one or two other attendants were standing over him, having just administered something to his comfort, he cleared his throat, as if desiring to speak audibly, and, as though he fancied himself addressing his successor, or some official associate in the government, said: "SIR, I WISH YOU TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT. I WISH THEM CARRIED OUT. I ASK NOTHING MORE."

He expired a little after midnight, surrounded by those members of his family who were in the city, the members of his cabinet and many personal friends, among whom were Colonels Chambers and Todd, who were the aids of General Harrison at the battle of the Thames, in 1813. The connexions of the president who were present in the executive mansion at the time of his decease, were the following: Mrs. William Harrison (son's widow); Mrs. Taylor, of Richmond (niece); Mr. D. O. Coupeland (nephew); Henry Harrison, of Virginia (grand nephew), and Findlay Harrison, of Ohio (grandson).

The general feeling throughout the country was thus eloquently portrayed in the National Intelligencer of April 9, 1841, which contained an account of the funeral:—

"Never, since the time of Washington, has any one man so concentrated upon himself the love and confidence of the American people; and never, since the melancholy day which shrouded a nation in mourning for his sudden death, has any event produced so general and so profound a sensation of surprise and sorrow.

"So brief had been the late president's illness, that now, as in the case of Washington, there had scarce been time for us to begin to fear, when the stunning blow of the reality fell upon us like the stroke of thunder from a cloudless sky. Men looked aghast, and staggered, as if amazed by something they could scarce believe. But it was true. He who, with beaming countenance, passed along our streets in the joy of his heart—he, the welcome, the long-expected, the desired, on whom all eyes were fastened, to whom all hearts went out; who had within him more stirring subjects of exhilarating consciousness than have met in any single bosom since Washington was crowned with wreaths as he came back from Yorktown, was, on Wednesday last, within one month, 'one little month,' borne along that same crowded avenue—crowded, not as before, with a jubilant people gathered from every quarter of the country, but with sincerely sorrowing multitudes following his bier. When the words, 'the president is dead,' met the ear, the man of business dropped his pen, the artisan dropped his tools—children looked into the faces of their parents, and wives into the countenances of their husbands—and the wail of sorrow arose as if each had lost a parent, or some near and dear friend. Could General Harrison now look down on the land he loved, he might, indeed, 'read his history in a nation's eyes;' and those whose bosoms glow and struggle with high purposes and strong desires for their country's good, may learn in what they now behold, wherever they turn their eyes, how glorious a reward awaits the memory of those who faithfully serve their country!"

On Wednesday, the 7th of April, the funeral of President Harrison took place at Washington, and was attended by an immense concourse of citizens, who thronged to the city from Baltimore, Philadelphia, Alexandria, and other places, anxious to join in the honors and solemnities paid to the memory of the illustrious deceased. The civic and military procession was large and imposing, occupying two miles in length. The funeral service of the episcopal church was recited by the Rev. Mr. Hawley. The body was interred in the congressional burying ground, but afterward removed to North Bend, Ohio, at the request of the family of General Harrison.

All party distinctions were merged in the feeling of respect due to the memory of the honored dead; and throughout the Union, funeral honors and other testimonials of public feeling, similar to those which took place on the death of General Washington, were awarded to the memory of Harrison. At every city, town, and village, in the Union, as the unwelcome tidings of the death of the president arrived, it was received with every demonstration of mourning and regret, and followed immediately by such marks of respect as the several communities had it in their power to offer. Such legislative bodies as happened to be in session, were among the foremost to demonstrate their sympathy with the general impulse. That exhibited by the legislature of Maryland, in leaving the seat of the state government, and attending the funeral as an organized body, was among the most touching evidences of the kind. The Pennsylvania legislature deputed a number of members from each branch of that body, to proceed from Harrisburg to Washington, to attend the funeral. The legislature of New York adopted such measures as the occasion enabled them to do, to testify their feelings. The respective courts, wherever they were in session, officially united in the general expression, as did also the municipalities of all the principal cities and towns in the Union. The occasion was also appropriately noticed by the clergy of the different denominations.

General Harrison left one son and three daughters, all living at or near North Bend, Ohio. Four sons and a daughter died before their father. All of the sons left children.

In person, General Harrison was tall and slender. Although he never had the appearance of possessing a robust constitution, yet such had been the effects of habitual activity and temperance, that few men at his age enjoyed so much bodily vigor. He had a fine dark eye, remarkable for its keenness, fire, and intelligence, and his face was strongly expressive of the vivacity of his mind, and the benevolence of his character.

The most remarkable traits of General Harrison's character, and those by which he was distinguished throughout his whole career, were his disinterestedness, his regard for the rights and comforts of others, his generous disposition, his mild and forbearing temper, and his plain, easy, and unostentatious manner.

He had a most intimate knowledge of the history, and foreign and domestic polity of the United States; and from the moderation of his political views and feelings as a party man, although firm, frank, and consistent, he was well calculated for the high station to which he was elected, and which it is believed he would have filled with ability, and to the satisfaction of the public, during his presidential term, had his life been spared. His talents, although, perhaps, not of the highest order, were very respectable, and, united with an accurate knowledge of mankind, enabled him to acquit himself well in the various public stations to which he was called. He was a bold and eloquent orator; and he has left on record numerous evidences of his literary acquirements, among which, besides his correspondence and public papers, we may mention his discourse before the Historical Society of Ohio (on the aborigines of the valley of the Ohio), published at Cincinnati in 1839, which can not fail to please and instruct either the scholar, the lover of history, or the antiquary.

44

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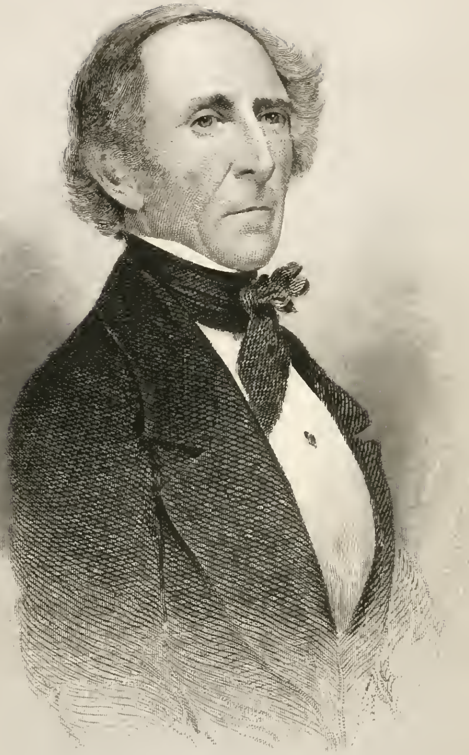

John Tyler

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JOHN TYLER.

The ancestors of John Tyler, the tenth president of the United States, and the sixth chief magistrate of the nation whose birthplace was Virginia, were among the early English settlers of the Old Dominion. This family of Tyler, it is understood, traced their lineage back to Walter, or Wat Tyler, who, in the fourteenth century, headed an insurrection in England, and, while demanding of the king (Richard II.) a recognition of the rights of the people, lost his life in their cause.

The father of the subject of this sketch, bearing the same name, was the second son of John Tyler, who was marshal of the colony, under the royal government, up to the period of his death, which occurred after the remonstrances against the stamp act, and whose patrimonial estate covered a large tract of country in and about Williamsburg. The son early entered with warmth and spirit into the discussion of those grievances which afterward kindled the flame of the revolution; and so earnestly were his sympathies enlisted in the cause of colonial rights, and so unhesitatingly were his opinions expressed, that his father, the marshal, often told him that he would some day be hung for a rebel. A rebel he did indeed prove, but his consequent exaltation was destined to be, not the scaffold, but the chair of state. Removing from James City, some time in 1775, to Charles City, he was, not long after, elected from that county a member of the house of delegates of Virginia, and in that capacity distinguished himself by the zeal and fearlessness with which he advocated the boldest measures of the revolution, and the devotion with which he lent all the energies of a powerful mind to its success.*

The intimate friend of Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and Edmund Randolph, he was scarcely less beloved by the entire people of Virginia.

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* We are indebted to a life of President Tyler, written by one of his friends, and published by Harper and Brothers, in 1844, for a part of this sketch.

Throughout the revolution, Mr. Tyler devoted himself unceasingly and untiringly to its success. A bold, free, and elegant speaker, his voice was never silent when it could avail aught for the great cause in which he was enlisted; and possessing an ample fortune at the commencement of the revolution—partly the inheritance of his father, but more the result of his own industry as a distinguished lawyer of the colony—the liberality with which he lavished his wealth upon its progress, and the utter disregard of selfish considerations with which he sacrificed his whole time during its continuance, to aid in bringing it to a successful termination, left him almost utterly impoverished at its close. None appreciated better than the people of Virginia the great services he had rendered, and the patriotic sacrifices he had made to the cause of independence; and he was elevated by them successively to the offices of speaker of the house of delegates, governor of the state, and judge in one of her highest courts. At the breaking out of the last war, he was appointed, by Mr. Madison, a judge of the federal court of admiralty. In February, 1813, he died, full of years and honors. The legislature passed resolutions expressive of their sense of the bereavement, and went into mourning for the remainder of the session.

Judge Tyler left three sons, Wat, John, and William, the second of whom, the subject of this memoir, was born in Charles City county, Virginia, on the 29th of March, 1790. Passing over the period of his early youth, when he was noted for his love of books, and particularly of historical works, we find young Tyler, at the age of twelve years, entering William and Mary college. Here he soon attracted the notice of Bishop Madison, the venerable president of that institution; and during his whole collegiate course, Mr. Tyler was, in an especial degree, a favorite of that distinguished man, as well as of his fellow-students. He passed through the courses at the age of seventeen, and on that occasion delivered an address on the subject of "female education," which was pronounced by the faculty to have been the best commencement oration delivered there within their recollection.

After leaving college, Mr. Tyler devoted himself to the study of law, already commenced during his collegiate studies, and passed the next two years in reading, partly with his father, and partly with Edmund Randolph, formerly governor of Virginia, and one of the most eminent lawyers in the state. At nineteen years of age, he appeared at the bar of his native county as a practising lawyer, a certificate having been given him without inquiry as to his age; and such was his success, that ere three months had elapsed there was scarcely a disputable case on the docket of the court in which he was not retained upon the one side or the other. The year after his appearance at the bar, he was offered a nomination as member of the legislature from his own county, but he declined the proffered honor, until the following year, when, having reached the age of twenty-one but a few days before the election took place, he was chosen nearly unanimously, a member of the house of delegates.

He took his seat in that branch of the Virginia legislature in December 1811. The breaking out of the war soon after, afforded fine scope for his oratorical abilities. Attached to the democratic party, and an advocate of the course of policy which had been pursued by Jefferson and Madison, in the limited sphere he then occupied, his voice was ever heard urging, so far as lay in the power of the government, the most energetic measures in carrying on the war. He spoke often, with the view of improving his powers of oratory; and the youthful debater had the gratification to find, that even in the forum of Virginia, the country of eloquence, his speeches commanded universal attention.

The senators in Congress from Virginia at that time, were Messrs. Giles and Brent, who had been instructed by the legislature to vote against the renewal of the charter of the bank of the United States. This instruction was disobeyed by Mr. Brent, in his vote on the question, in February, 1811, and Mr. Tyler introduced a resolution of censure into the house of delegates, animadverting severely upon the course of the senator, and laying it down as a principle to be established thereafter, that any person accepting the office of senator of the United States from the state of Virginia, by such acceptance tacitly bound himself to obey, during the period he should serve, the instructions he might receive from its legislature. Twenty-five years afterward he had not forgotten the ideas of senatorial duty he then inculcated, when, himself a senator, he was called upon to record a vote not less repugnant to his judgment than to his conscience. Mr. Tyler was elected to the legislature for five successive years; and, as an instance of his popularity in his native county, it may be mentioned, that on one occasion he received all the votes polled except five. Some years later, when a candidate for Congress, of the two hundred votes given in the same county, he received all but one, over a distinguished competitor.

At the time the British forces were in the Chesapeake bay, and threatened an attack on Norfolk and Richmond, Mr. Tyler evinced a disposition to serve his country in the field as well as in the halls of legislation, by raising a volunteer company, and devoting himself assiduously to effecting an efficient organization of the militia in his neighborhood. Hence the title of "Captain Tyler," which was applied to him, in ridicule, when president of the United States. In the sequel, the troops under his command were not brought into action, and his military career was, consequently, short and bloodless.

During the session of 1815–'16, while he was still a member of the house of delegates, Mr. Tyler was elected one of the executive council, in which capacity he acted until November, 1816, when, by the death of the Hon. John Clopton, a vacancy occurred in the representation in

Congress, from the Richmond district. Two candidates were presented, Mr. Andrew Stevenson, afterward distinguished in the national councils, and then speaker of the house of delegates, and Mr. Tyler. The contest was severe, and enlisted to a great extent the public feeling, though it produced no cessation of the friendly relations which had always existed between the two opposing candidates. Mr. Stevenson was a most popular man in Richmond, his place of residence, but Mr. Tyler's popularity was not less great in his own and the neighboring counties; and, after a closely contested canvass, Mr. Tyler was elected, by a majority of only about thirty votes. It was a mere trial of personal popularity, as they were both of the same political principle; and when Mr. Tyler retired from Congress, in 1821, he warmly advocated the election of Mr. Stevenson as his successor.

Mr. Tyler took his seat in the house of representatives in December, 1816, having reached the twenty-sixth year of his age the previous month of March. As a new member, custom, not less than the modesty which is ever the accompaniment of merit, prohibited him from taking a very active part in the proceedings of the house. Yet even during this period he was not idle, but occasionally participated in the discussions which occupied the short portion of time for which he had been elected.

Having witnessed the inauguration of President Monroe, Mr. Tyler returned home to his constituents, in March, 1817, and the following month he received a testimonial of their approbation, in his re-election to Congress by an overwhelming majority over his former rival, Mr. Stevenson.

In the fifteenth Congress many subjects of magnitude were brought forward and discussed. Among them were the Seminole war and the South American question. Mr. Clay, the speaker, introduced a proposition to acknowledge the independence of the provinces of Rio de la Plata, against which Mr. Tyler voted. He supported the resolutions of censure on the conduct of General Jackson in the Seminole war, taking the same view as some of his colleagues and Mr. Clay on that subject. The question of internal improvements by the general government was agitated at this session, as it had been by the previous Congress; on both occasions Mr. Tyler voted against all the propositions offered in the house which countenanced the doctrine of the possession of the power by the general government, under the constitution, to make internal improvements. Thus he avowed on, all occasions, the state-rights or strict construction doctrines of the dominant party in Virginia, on constitutional points. The conduct of the directors of the bank of the United States, which institution was chartered in 1816, was the subject of investigation at this session of Congress, and Mr. Tyler was placed on the committee appointed to inspect the concerns of the bank. When the report of the committee was made, Mr. Tyler supported a resolution offered by Mr. Trimble of Kentucky, requiring that a *scire facias* should be issued immediately against the bank.

In his speech on this occasion, Mr. Tyler avowed his belief that the creation of this corporation was unconstitutional.

In 1819, Mr. Tyler was re-elected to Congress, there being no opposing candidate. He took an active part in the debates on the Missouri question, and on the proposed revision of the tariff. He opposed any restrictions upon Missouri, on the admission of that state into the Union; and also made an elaborate argument against the policy of a protective tariff. Ere the close of this Congress, increasing ill health compelled Mr. Tyler to resign his seat in that body. Placed on the committee of ways and means, at a time when the financial affairs of the country were in a most disordered condition, his whole time and energies were devoted to the fulfilment of his duties, and constant labor and confinement made fearful inroads upon a constitution not strong by nature. He left the house of representatives, carrying with him the reputation of an eloquent speaker, a constant advocate of popular rights, and a democrat of the school of Jefferson. He retired to his farm in Charles City county, among constituents who approved of his course in Congress, and were conscious that naught but physical inability had compelled him to leave their service.

Mr. Tyler now returned to the practice of his profession, but he was not suffered long to remain in private life. In the spring of 1823, after much urgent solicitation, he consented to become again a candidate for the legislature, and was elected with little or no opposition, and, in December, took his seat in that body which had been so early familiar to him. He soon took the lead in the debates of the house of delegates, and during the two years which followed, he having been twice re-elected, performed a most conspicuous part in all the proceedings. There was little of the legislation of Virginia at that period that did not bear the impress of his hands. He was an ardent advocate of a comprehensive system of public improvement by the state. He regretted to see Virginia gradually falling from the high estate she had occupied in the Union; and he put forth his utmost efforts to arrest the downward progress of the commonwealth, and to arouse her dormant energies to a display of her vast resources. He was not wholly unsuccessful. The construction of roads and canals was liberally encouraged by the legislature, and many of the finest works in the state are monuments to the indefatigable exertions of John Tyler.

In December, 1825, Mr. Pleasants's term of office having expired, Mr. Tyler was elected governor of Virginia. The office, unsolicited and unexpected, was conferred upon him by a large vote, there being, on joint ballot of the two houses of the legislature, for Tyler 131, for Floyd 81, scattering 2. During his administration of Virginia, Mr. Tyler promoted the cause of internal improvement, and devoted himself also to the healing of sectional disputes among the people. In July, 1825, he delivered, at the capitol square, in Richmond, an eloquent eulogy on the death of Mr. Jefferson.

During the next session of the legislature, Mr. Tyler was re-elected governor of Virginia by a unanimous vote. He was not, however, permitted to serve out his term. A senator of the United States was to be elected, for six years from the expiration of the term of John Randolph on the ensuing 4th of March. Mr. Randolph was the candidate of the democratic party for a re-election; but the strange vagaries and singular conduct which had so far marked his career in the senate, had excited discontent with very many of that party, and, convinced that he was no longer a proper representative of the state of Virginia, they began to look about for some man who, professing the same principles as themselves, had the firmness and ability to set them forth, and the dignity and strength of character to cause them to be respected. The friends of Mr. Adams's administration being in the minority in the legislature, united with a few of their political opponents in the support of Governor Tyler, in justice to whom, it must be said, that he sought not the nomination. "On the contrary," he remarked, in a letter written before the election, "I have constantly opposed myself to all solicitations. I desire, most earnestly, to be left at peace. There is no motive which could induce me to seek to change my present station for a seat in the senate at this time. I can not admit that to be *one* in a body of forty-eight members is to occupy a more elevated station than that presented in the chief magistracy of Virginia. My private interests, intimately connected with the good of my family, are more highly sustained by remaining where I am, than by the talked-of change." He also declared, in the same letter, that his political preferences on the fundamental principles of the government were the same with those espoused by Mr. Randolph.

Notwithstanding the positive manner in which he disclaimed any desire to be invested with the senatorial dignity, and the consequent loss of votes, Mr. Tyler was elected senator on the first ballot, the vote being for Tyler 115, Randolph 110.

The committee of the legislature appointed to wait on Governor Tyler and announce to him his election as senator, used the following, among other remarks: "Allow us, sir, to express to you the satisfaction which we feel in this new proof of the confidence which Virginia places in your known integrity, talents, and patriotism, believing that, as in your past, so in your future public life, you will never disappoint her confidence, and ever study to promote her true happiness; and while always faithfully representing, will ably and effectually vindicate her interests."

Mr. Tyler, in his reply, said, "A sense of what is due to the legislative will denies to me the privilege of giving longer audience to the suggestion of my feelings. That voice which called me to the chief magistracy, now makes upon me a new demand. I have opposed to it my wishes and inclinations up to that period when acquiescence becomes a duty, and resistance would be censurable by all. I shall, then, in due season, accept the appointment with which I have been honored. Be pleased, gentlemen, to bear to your respective houses my most profound acknowledgments for this distinguished testimonial of their confidence; convey to them, renewed assurances of my unshaken allegiance to the constitution, as received and expounded by our fathers; say to them, that if I carry with me into the national councils less of talent than many of my predecessors, yet that, in singleness of purpose, and in ardent devotion to the principles of civil liberty, I yield to none. If Virginia has changed her representative, her principles remain unaltered. Be assured, that the only and highest aspiration of my ambition consists in the desire of promoting the happiness of my native state, and that it shall be the untiring effort of my life to advance and vindicate her interests."

This election, though regretted by the immediate friends of Mr. Randolph and the most zealous of the democratic party in Virginia, who were desirous to retain Mr. Randolph in the senate, in consequence of his violent hostility to the administration of Mr. Adams, was generally popular with the people of Virginia. Even the Richmond Enquirer, devoted as it was to Mr. Randolph's interests, in a paragraph regretting his failure, after enumerating a long list of causes which, it asserted, led to that result, said, "Yet even this combination could not have succeeded in favor of *any other* man in the commonwealth than John Tyler, because he carried with him personal friends who would have voted for John Randolph in preference to any other man than himself;" thus giving the highest possible evidence of the esteem in which Mr. Tyler was then held by the people of his native state.

At the presidential election of 1824–'5, Mr. Tyler acted with a large majority of the politicians in the state, in giving a preference to William H. Crawford for the presidency, and that gentleman received the electoral vote of the state, and a decided expression of the popular will in his favor. When, however, the election was determined by the house of representatives, in Congress, in favor of Mr. Adams, the Crawford party in Virginia were generally satisfied, as Mr. Adams was their second choice; and Mr. Tyler wrote a letter to Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, approving of his vote for Mr. Adams, in preference to General Jackson; but soon after the election of the former to the presidency, Mr. Tyler changed his views, and with most of the friends of Mr. Crawford, became an opponent of the administration.

A few days after his election as senator, Mr. Tyler sent to the legislature his resignation of the office of governor. The following is an extract from his message on that occasion: "The principles on which I have acted, without abandonment, in any one instance, for the last sixteen years, in Congress and in the legislative hall of this state, will be the principles by which I will regulate my future political life. Keeping them constantly in view, yielding them neither to the force of circumstances nor to the suggestions of expediency, and thereby seeking to promote the lasting interests of my beloved country, if I do not acquire the individual confidence of Virginia, I shall at least have preserved my own consistency, and secured my peace of mind through the days of my increasing years, and in the hour of my final dissolution."

Upon the occasion of his retirement from the chief magistracy of the state, he was invited to a public dinner, by a large number of the members of the legislature, and of the citizens of Richmond. In answer to the following toast—"John Tyler, our friend and guest—a republican too firm to be driven from his principles—too upright to be swerved by the laws of ambition or power"—Mr. Tyler, among other remarks, said:—

"I can be at no loss to ascribe this manifestation of public respect to its proper source. It flows from the late senatorial election, and the incidents connected with it. I place upon it, therefore, the highest possible value. The recesses of my heart have been attempted to be scanned with the view of detecting some lurking wish at variance with my public declarations. Had I desired a change, what was there to have prevented me from openly seeking it? Are not the offices of the republic equally open to all its citizens? When was an exclusive monopoly established? or when was it before that 'Rome contained but one man'? Virginia, thank Heaven, depends upon no one of her citizens, however distinguished by talents, for her character or standing. She has been compared to the mother of the Gracchii, and I trust that she may still be permitted to be proud of her sons. For one who had been taught from early infancy that golden rule, that, next to his Creator, his first duty belonged to his country, and his last to himself, how could I have stood acquitted, had I permitted private considerations to have controlled the obligations of public duty? By accepting the appointment, while I interfered with the pretensions of no other citizen, I have acquitted myself of a sacred obligation."

After speaking at large upon the administration, and what he had hoped would have been the policy of Mr. Adams, he said:—

"Candor requires me here publicly to say, that his first splendid message to Congress long since withered all my hopes. I saw in it an almost total disregard of the federative principle—a more latitudinous construction of the constitution than has ever before been insisted on; lying not so much in the particular measures recommended—which, though bad enough, had some excuse in precedent—as in the broad and general principles there laid down as the basis of governmental duty. From the moment of seeing that message, all who have known anything of me have known that I stood distinctly opposed to this administration; not from a factious spirit, not with a view to elevate a favorite, or to advance myself, but on the great principles which have regulated my past life. I honestly believe the preservation of the federative principles of our government to be inseparably connected with the perpetuation of liberty."

This public compliment was given him on the 3d of March 1827, the last day of the period during which he occupied the office of governor. On the 3d of December, 1827, Mr. Tyler took his seat in the senate of the United States, and at once arrayed himself with the opposition, which, arising from the circumstances attending Mr. Adams's election, and combining the supporters of Jackson, Crawford, and Calhoun, finally overthrew the administration. There were many minor points upon which the opposition acted with little or no unity; consisting of men who had but a short time before held conflicting political relations—they were, nevertheless, firmly united against the administration, and resolute in combating its policy and doctrines; and at the time of Mr. Tyler's entering the senate, the entire opposition had rallied in the support of General Jackson.

In accordance with the Virginia doctrines respecting the powers of the general government, and the policy of the country respecting trade and commerce, which also coincided with the views entertained by Mr. Tyler himself, he voted against the tariff bill of 1828, and the various projects for internal improvement which were introduced. In the debate concerning the powers of the vice-president, Mr. Tyler participated, supporting the positions assumed by Mr. Calhoun, who then occupied the chair of the senate.

On the accession of General Jackson to the presidency, Mr. Tyler supported his administration, concurring, in this respect, with a large majority of the people of Virginia. He, however, pursued an independent course in the senate, disapproving of some of the nominations of the president, and holding, as he did, to a strict construction of the constitution, in 1831 he opposed the appropriation to pay the negotiators of the treaty with Turkey, as that mission had not been authorized by Congress. Though a sincere friend of the administration, he regarded this act of General Jackson, in appointing commissioners, as a dangerous stretch of the presidential power; and while he by no means withdrew his support from the general policy of the party then in power, he felt bound to declare his opinion of acts which all his ideas of constitutional authority led him to reprobate.

To projects of internal improvement by the general government, Mr. Tyler was uniformly opposed, believing them unconstitutional, as we have already stated. He therefore highly approved of General Jackson's veto on the Maysville road bill, the passage of which he had previously opposed in the senate, in a speech of considerable length. The subject of the tariff being brought before the senate at the session of 1831–'2, by Mr. Clay, in a resolution proposing certain changes in the existing duties, a long and able debate arose thereon, in which Mr. Tyler participated.

His speech on this occasion was continued for three days, and evinced an extensive knowledge of the subject; and it was characterized by a warmth, earnestness, and depth of eloquence, which gave ample evidence of the intensity of his feeling on a topic which then excited much of the public attention at the south. He was opposed to a tariff specially for the protection of home industry, but in favor of a tariff for revenue which might incidentally afford such protection, and he expressed an anxiety for such an adjustment of the question as would restore peace and harmony to the Union.

The question of renewing the charter of the bank of the United States came up at the same session. Mr. Tyler steadily opposed the bill to modify and continue in force that institution, at every step of its progress through the senate, and voted against it on its final passage. After receiving the sanction of the house of representatives, the bill renewing the charter of the bank was defeated by the veto of President Jackson.

For the confirmation of Mr. Van Buren, who was nominated at this session for minister to England, Mr. Tyler gave his vote; and viewing the tariff of 1832 as a continuance of the system of protection, he voted against that measure, although the duties on imports were much reduced thereby, on many articles. With the nullifiers of South Carolina Mr. Tyler sympathized; and when the president took decided ground against the anti-tariff and nullifying proceedings of that state, the Virginia senator did not hesitate to withdraw his support from the administration, on the ground that they had abandoned the principles of state-rights, as he understood them, on which General Jackson had been supported in the southern states, and to which he owed his election as president. A bill called the force bill being introduced into the senate, to provide for the collection of the revenue, and vesting extraordinary powers in the president, Mr. Tyler opposed it in an animated speech. After a lengthened debate, the bill, was passed, Mr. Tyler's being the only name in the negative. The other opponents of the bill, Mr. Calhoun at their head, left the senate-chamber when the vote was taken, considering further opposition useless. During the progress of the bill, however, efforts were made in both houses to terminate the controversy peaceably. Mr. Clay finally introduced a bill in the senate, in February, 1833, which, conceived in the spirit of concession inculcated in the speech of Mr. Tyler, united the opposing parties in its favor, and passed the senate, with few dissenting voices. For this Mr. Tyler voted, and the bill, so celebrated since as Mr. Clay's compromise act, having previously passed the house, received the signature of the president.

During the preceding session of Congress, Mr. Tyler was re-elected to the senate for six years from the 4th of March, 1833. The most prominent among the proceedings of Congress, at the session of 1833–'4, was the action of the two houses upon the removal of the deposites. In the interim between the last adjournment and the commencement of that session, the president determined upon removing the public moneys from the bank of the United States. Mr. Duane, the secretary of the treasury, having refused to comply with the wishes of the president, was dismissed from office, and Mr. Taney was appointed in his place, after which the will of the president was accomplished. Early in the session the subject was taken up in the senate, and resolutions of censure against the president, introduced by Mr. Clay, were adopted. For these resolutions Mr. Tyler voted, as did the senators from the south and west who held state-rights doctrines, and who now acted with Mr. Calhoun, in opposition to the administration of General Jackson. These, joined with the original opponents of the administration, formed a decided majority in the senate.

Mr. Tyler took an active part in the debate on the removal of the deposites. However unconstitutional he thought the establishment of the bank of the United States, it had been established by law, and by the same law it was made the depository of the public money; and any act by a public officer in derogation of that law, was as much deserving of, and as quickly received his censure, as if he had been the most ardent supporter of the institution. In his views he was sustained by instructions from Virginia, which state he said was exactly where she always had been —against the assumption of power by the Congress or by the president. "Her instructions to me," he continued, "convey the information, that she is against the bank, as she has always been; can any man find his apology for ratifying the late proceedings of the executive department, in the mere fact that the bank of the United States is a great evil; that it ought never to have been created; and that it should not be rechartered? For one, I say, if it is to die, let it die by law. It is a corporate existence created by law, and while it exists, entitled to the protection which the law throws around private rights. This, sir, is the aspect in which I regard this question; and this, I am instructed to say, is the light in which Virginia regards it."

The call was often made upon the committee of finance, of which Mr. Tyler was a member, to report a scheme of treasury agency. Mr. Tyler answered that he could see no propriety for that call, until the sense of the senate should be expressed upon the resolutions then under their consideration. If the executive were sustained in the power it had exerted over the subject, then Congress had nothing to do with it. The great question before the country was, whether Congress or the president was to be charged with the keeping of the treasury. The latter had already decided to establish a treasury agency himself, and if Congress affirmed that he had done so with full power and authority, that would be decisive of the question as to legislative cognizance. The executive authority was, in such case, coextensive with the whole subject, and the legislature would encroach upon his rights if it acted at all.

At this session, Mr. Tyler, from the committee on finance, which had been directed to inquire into the condition and affairs of the United States bank, made an able and voluminous report thereon. The report was assailed by Mr. Benton, immediately upon its introduction into the senate, and in reply to him, Mr. Tyler entered into a defence of the document, and from his remarks we make the following extracts :—

"Nothing," said he, "would please me more than to have the report which has been so furiously attacked by the senator from Missouri, referred to another committee for their most rigid examination ; and I would be well pleased that he be one of the committee. Let him summon his witnesses, and take depositions without number ; let him then return with his budget to the house, and lay them, with or without an air of triumph, on the table. He would find himself mistaken. All his witnesses combined would not be able to overthrow the testimony upon which the report of the committee is based. There is not a single declaration in the report which is not founded upon testimony which cannot lie—written documentary evidence which no party testimony can overcome."

"The honorable senator has denominated the report 'an elaborate defence of the bank.' If he had paid more attention to the reading, or had waited to have it in print, he would not have hazarded such a declaration. The committee have presented both sides of the question ; the view most favorable, and that most unfavorable to the institution."

"He has loudly talked of the committee having been made an instrument of by the bank. For myself, I renounce the ascription. I must tell the senator that I can no more be made an instrument of by the bank, than by the still greater and more formidable power, the administration. I stand upon this floor to accomplish the purposes for which I am sent. In the consciousness of my own honesty, I stand firm and erect. I worship alone at the shrine of truth and honor. It is a precious thing in the eyes of some, to bask in the sunshine of power. I rest only upon the support which has *never* failed me—the high and lofty feeling of my constituents. I would not be an instrument even in their hands, if it were possible for them to require it of me, to gratify an unrighteous motive."

"The committee, in their investigations, have sought for nothing but the truth. I am opposed—have always been opposed—to the bank. In its creation I regard the constitution as having been violated, and I desire to see it expire. But the senate appointed me, with others, to inquire whether it was guilty of certain charges, and I should regard myself as the basest of mankind were I to charge it falsely. The report is founded on unquestionable documentary evidence. I shall hold myself ready to answer all the objections which can be raised against it, and to prove, from the documents themselves, that the report is made with the utmost fairness, and the most scrupulous regard to truth."

The extracts from Mr. Tyler's speeches and other productions, which we have given, serve to elucidate his political character and modes of thinking, as well as to exhibit the uniformity of his course, in adhering with singular tenacity to the doctrines of state-rights and strict construction of the Virginia school of democracy. His course in the senate effected a separation between him and that portion of the democratic party in Virginia, who still adhered to General Jackson, and who, in the sequel, supported Mr. Van Buren for the presidency. But there was still a wide difference between the principles and views entertained by Mr. Tyler, and those of the original opponents of General Jackson, who formed the largest proportion of the party which took the name of whigs, previous to the presidential election of 1836.

Near the close of the session, in March, 1835, Mr. Tyler was elected president of the senate *pro tempore*, by the united votes of the whig and state-rights senators. On taking the chair, he made a brief and eloquent address, in the course of which he said: "You are the representatives of sovereign states, deputed by them to uphold and maintain their rights and interests. You may severally, in your turn, have become the objects of attack and denunciation before the public; but there is not, and can not be an American who does not turn his eyes on the senate of the United States, as to the great conservative body of our federal system, and to this chamber as the ark in which the covenant is deposited. To have received, therefore, at your hands, this station, furnishes to me abundant cause for self-gratulation."

One of the last acts of Mr. Tyler, at this session, was to vote against the amendment made by the house of representatives to the fortification bill, placing three millions of dollars at the disposal of the president, to provide for anticipated difficulties with France. This was a proposition to place the war-making power, belonging solely to Congress, in the hands of the president. The amendment was disagreed to by the senate, and Congress adjourned without passing the bill.

At the next session, that of 1835—'6, during the brief period he remained in the senate, Mr. Tyler took an active part in behalf of the sufferers by the great fire in New York, and supported the bill introduced into Congress for their relief. In February, 1836, the legislature of Virginia passed resolutions instructing the senators from that state to vote for a resolution directing the resolution of March 28, 1834, to be expunged from the journal of the senate. These resolutions were then, by direction of the general assembly, forwarded, by the speakers of the respective houses, to the senators from Virginia.

Mr. Leigh, the colleague of Mr. Tyler, in answer to the resolutions, wrote a long and able letter, in which, while he acknowledged the right of instruction in all cases where no constitutional point was involved, or where any doubt existed as to the constitutionality of any particular measure, he denied that he was bound to obey any instruction commanding him to do an act which, in his conscientious opinion, would be, in itself, a plain violation of the instrument he was sworn to support, and in its consequences dangerous and mischievous in the extreme. He concluded his letter by declaring, that he would neither obey the instructions given him, nor resign his seat, and expressed the determination to vindicate the resolutions of the 28th of March, 1834, at any time when they should be brought under consideration. Mr. Leigh, however, resigned his seat in 1836.

Mr. Tyler took a somewhat different course from his colleague ; and his conduct on the occasion greatly elevated him in the estimation of the public, particularly among the advocates of the doctrine of instruction. He might well have been held excusable, even by them, if he had refused to obey the instructions, and had retained his seat, for he was supported by the fact that the very vote he was now called upon to expunge was given under instructions, if not as explicit, at least quite as decisive of the opinion of the legislature as those now presented. But he was not willing then to overthrow or mar in the least degree the consistency of his previous life, with regard to the right of instruction. As his first act in the legislature of his own state had been the advocacy of that principle, so the first speech he had ever made in the Congress of the United States was declaratory of what he considered the same truth—the right of the constituent to instruct—the duty of the representative to obey. He could not obey the instructions he had received without falsifying his own judgment, and violating his conscience by a breach of that constitution he had sworn to support, a clause of which requires that the senate shall "keep a journal of its proceedings, and publish it from time to time ;" and in such circumstances he was not long in deciding to surrender into the hands of those who gave it, or rather their successors, the honorable place with which he had been intrusted. He could not silently submit, however, to be instructed out of his seat, and he took the opportunity to lay before the people of the state and the public generally, in his letter of resignation to the legislature of Virginia, an exhibition of the principles by which his public life had thus far been guided, and of the motives by which his present conduct was ruled. The following are extracts from this letter, dated Washington, February 20, 1836 :—

"I now reaffirm the opinion at all times heretofore expressed by me, that instructions are mandatory, provided they do not require a violation of the constitution, or the commission of an act of moral turpitude. In the course of a somewhat long political life, it must have occurred that my opinions have been variant from the opinions of those I represent ; but in presenting to me the alternative of resignation in this instance, you give me to be distinctly informed that the accomplishment of your object is regarded as of such primary importance that my resignation is desired if compliance can not be yielded. I am bound to consider you as in this fairly representing the sentiments of our common constituents, the people of Virginia, to whom alone you are amenable if you have mistaken their wishes.

"In voting for the resolution of the senate, against which you are now so indignant, I did no more than carry out the people's declared views of the legislature, as expressed in their resolutions of that day, and which were passed by overwhelming majorities of more than two to one in both houses. The terms employed by the legislature were strong and decided. The conduct of the president was represented as dangerous and alarming. I was told that it could not be too strongly condemned; that he had manifested a disposition greatly to extend his official influence; and because, with these declarations before me, I voted for a resolution which declares 'that the president, in the late executive proceedings, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and laws, but in derogation of both,' I am now ostracized by your fiat, which requires obedience or resignation. Compare the resolutions of the general assembly of that day with the above resolution, and its mildness will be entirely obvious. I submit, with all due deference, to yourselves, what is to be the condition of the senator in future, if, for yielding obedience to the wishes of one legislature, he is to be called upon to resign by another? If he disobeys the first, he is contemned; if he obeys the last, he violates his oath, and becomes an object of scorn and contempt. I respectfully ask, if this be the mode by which the great right of instructions is to be sustained, may it not degenerate into an engine of faction—an instrument to be employed by the outs to get in, instead of being directed to noble purposes—to the advancement of the cause of civil liberty? May it not be converted into a political guillotine, devoted to the worst of purposes? Nor are these anticipations at all weakened by the fact, as it existed in the case now under consideration, that several of those who constitute the present majority in the general assembly, and who now call upon me to expunge the journal or to resign my seat, actually voted for the very resolutions of a previous session, to which I have referred.

"I dare not touch the journal of the senate. The constitution forbids it. In the midst of all the agitations of party, I have heretofore stood by that sacred instrument. It is the only post of honor and of safety. A seat in the senate is sufficiently elevated to fill the measure of any man's ambition; and as an evidence of the sincerity of my convictions that your resolutions can not be executed, without violating my oath, I surrender into your hands three unexpired years of my term. I shall carry with me into retirement, the principles which I brought with me into public life, and by the surrender of the high station to which I was called by the voice of the people of Virginia, I shall set an example to my children which shall teach them to regard as nothing place and office, when to be either obtained or held at the sacrifice of honor."

At the same time, Mr. Tyler placed in the hands of the president of the senate, Mr. Van Buren, a letter informing the senate that he had resigned into the hands of the general assembly of Virginia his seat as a senator from that state. Mr. Rives was elected, by the legislature of Virginia, to fill the vacancy occasioned by Mr. Tyler's resignation, and the latter retired once more to his home and the practice of his profession. His course was highly commended, not only in Virginia, but throughout the Union. Soon after his retirement, a public dinner was given to Mr. Leigh and himself, and the following was among the toasts expressing similar feelings: "Our honored guest, John Tyler—'Expunged' from a post that he adorned, and the functions of which he ever faithfully and ably discharged, by the complying tools of an unprincipled aspirant, he is but the more endeared to the hearts of his countrymen."

Some time in 1830, Mr. Tyler had removed from Charles City county to Gloucester, where his family had resided until the present year. He now again removed to Williamsburg, the ancient dwelling-place of his fathers; and though his name was, in 1836, placed upon the electoral ticket of some of the states, as a candidate for the vice-presidency, he mingled very little, for a time, in political matters, devoting himself exclusively to his private pursuits.

He was first nominated for vice-president in Maryland, in December, 1835, and in that state placed on the ticket with General Harrison, the whig candidate for president. He also received, in 1836, the support of the friends of Judge White in the states where that gentleman was the candidate for president against Mr. Van Buren; but Maryland was the only state that voted for Harrison which gave its electoral vote to Mr. Tyler. He, however, received the votes of South Carolina (which state gave its vote to Mr. Mangum, of North Carolina, for president), Georgia, and Tennessee, for vice-president, in addition to the votes of Maryland, making 47 in all, Francis Granger receiving the votes of the other states in the opposition, including Kentucky. It thus appears that Mr. Tyler was not in 1836 considered the whig candidate for vice-president, his principal support for that office being derived from the state-rights party of the south and west, who in some respects co-operated with the whigs in opposition to Jackson and Van Buren. Virginia refused to vote for Richard M. Johnson for vice-president, but as the friends of Jackson and Van Buren controlled the electoral vote of the state, it was not given to Mr. Tyler, but to William Smith, of Alabama.

In the spring of 1838, Mr. Tyler was elected by the whigs of James City county, a member of the house of delegates of Virginia; and during the subsequent session of the legislature he acted with the whig party, under which name the different sections of the opposition to Mr. Van Buren's administration gradually became amalgamated in Virginia.

In 1839, Mr. Tyler was elected one of the delegates from Virginia to the whig national convention which met at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to nominate candidates for president and vice-president of the United States. It is well known that Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, was the favorite candidate of the delegates from the southern states, in that convention. The course of Mr. Clay in the senate, on many occasions, particularly in bringing about a settlement of the controversy respecting the tariff and South Carolina nullification, had rendered him popular with the state-rights section of the whigs, and they were anxious for his nomination to the presidency. In this feeling Mr. Tyler warmly participated, with all the Virginia delegation. He was chosen one of the vice-presidents of the convention, and exerted his influence in favor of Mr. Clay. General Harrison, however, was nominated for president, and Mr. Tyler was among those who expressed their deep regrets at the defeat of Mr. Clay as a candidate.

The question of a candidate for president had so much absorbed the attention of the whigs, that the subject of a candidate for vice-president had attracted but little attention. When General Harrison was nominated for the first office, it became necessary, in the judgment of the delegates, to take a candidate for vice-president from the south, and, after a brief consultation, the nomination was offered to Mr. Tyler, and accepted. As he was an ardent friend of Mr. Clay, it was supposed that this nomination would be popular with the friends of that gentleman, under the feelings of disappointment with which it was anticipated they would receive the nomination of General Harrison. Had the event of Mr. Tyler's succession to the presidency been contemplated, it can not be doubted that a scrutiny of his principles, and the remembrance of his course and action on cherished whig measures, would have caused more hesitancy in placing him on the presidential ticket, if not his prompt rejection, by the whig convention.

The speeches, letters, and declarations of Mr. Tyler, during the canvass of 1840, were generally satisfactory to the whigs, and gave reasonable expectation that he would co-operate with General Harrison and Mr. Clay in carrying out the wishes of the whig party, if successful in the election.

The triumph of the whigs, which elevated General Harrison to the presidency, Mr. Tyler to the vice-presidency, and secured a whig majority in both houses of Congress, we have elsewhere related in this volume. It only remains to mention, in this place, that the sudden and lamented death of President Harrison, in one month after his inauguration, devolved upon Mr. Tyler, in April, 1841, the high and responsible duties of president of the United States. The events of the succeeding four years will be found in our history of his administration.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Tyler mistook his position in attempting to act with the whig party, and in accepting their nomination for one of the highest offices in the nation, which, by the dispensation of Providence, placed him in the presidential chair, clothed with the power and patronage of that high station. That the whigs also acted without due reflection, in his nomination, is alike evident; and from these two causes flowed the consequences which resulted in the embarrassment, difficulties, and total loss of popularity with both the great parties of the country, on the one side, of the president, and bitter disappointment and chagrin on the part of the whigs.

In person, Mr. Tyler is rather tall and thin, with light complexion, blue eyes, and prominent features. His manners are plain and affable, and in private life he is amiable, hospitable, and courteous. His errors as a politician are ascribed, by some, to a want of judgment, to an inordinate vanity, and the influence of bad advice; to which may be added, extreme obstinacy in persisting in opinions once formed, without regard to consequences.

In 1813, at the age of twenty-three, Mr. Tyler married a lady about his own age, Miss Letitia Christian, daughter of Robert Christian, Esq., of New Kent county, Virginia. She was a lady much esteemed by her acquaintances, as a wife, a mother, a friend, and a Christian, being for many years a member of the episcopal church. . She died at Washington, September 10, 1842, leaving three sons and three daughters. While president of the United States, Mr. Tyler was again married, to Miss Julia Gardiner, of New York, daughter of the late David Gardiner, Esq., of that city, who was killed by an explosion on board the steamship Princeton, in February, 1844. The marriage of the president took place at New York, on the 26th of June, 1844. Since his retirement from the presidency, Mr. Tyler has resided at his seat near Williamsburg, Virginia.

ADMINISTRATION OF TYLER.

In consequence of the decease of William H. Harrison, president of the United States, on the 4th of April, 1841, being one month after his inauguration, the duties of the executive office devolved upon John Tyler, the vice-president, elected at the same time with President Harrison. Immediately after the decease of the president, Mr. Fletcher Webster, chief clerk in the department of state, accompanied by Mr. Beall, an officer of the senate, set out for the residence of the vice-president, in Virginia, bearing to him the following letter:—

"Washington, *April* 4, 1841.

"To John Tyler, Vice-President of the United States:—

"Sir: It has become our most painful duty to inform you that William Henry Harrison, late president of the United States, has departed this life.

"This distressing event took place this day, at the president's mansion, in this city, at thirty minutes before one, in the morning.

"We lose no time in despatching the chief clerk in the state department, as a special messenger to bear you the melancholy tidings.

"We have the honor to be, with the highest regard your obedient servants.

"Daniel Webster, *Secretary of State*,
"Thomas Ewing, *Secretary of the Treasury*,
"John Bell, *Secretary of War*,
"John J. Crittenden, *Attorney-General*,
"Francis Granger, *Postmaster-General*."

By the extraordinary despatch used in sending the official intelligence to the vice-president, at Williamsburg, and a similar despatch by him in repairing to the seat of government, Mr. Tyler arrived in Washington on Tuesday morning, the 6th of April, at four o'clock, and took lodgings at Brown's hotel.

At twelve o'clock all the heads of departments, with the exception of the secretary of the navy, Mr. Badger, who was then absent on a visit to his family, waited upon President Tyler, to pay him their official and personal respects. They were received by him with politeness and kindness. He signified his deep feeling of the public calamity sustained by the death of

President Harrison, and expressed his profound sensibility to the heavy responsibilities so suddenly devolved upon himself. He spoke of the present state of things with great concern and seriousness, and made known his wishes that the several heads of departments would continue to fill the places which they then respectively occupied; and expressed his confidence that they would afford all the aid in their power to enable him to carry on the administration of the government successfully.

The president then took and subscribed the following oath of office:—

"I do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve. protect, and defend, the constitution of the United States.

"JOHN TYLER.

"*April* 6, 1841."

"DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, } ss.
"*City and County of Washington*, }

"I, William Cranch, chief judge of the circuit court of the District of Columbia, certify that the above-named John Tyler personally appeared before me this day, and although he deems himself qualified to perform the duties and exercise the powers and office of president, on the death of William Henry Harrison, late president of the United States, without any other oath than that which he has taken as vice-president, yet, as doubts may arise, and for greater caution, took and subscribed the foregoing oath before me.

"W. CRANCH.

"*April* 6, 1841."

On the following day, the new president attended the funeral of President Harrison, taking the place assigned him in the procession, following the heads of departments, after the family and relations of the late president. Two days after this solemn pageant was over, an inaugural address to the people of the United States, which will be found in the preceding pages, was issued by President Tyler, through the public press; the principles of which address gave general satisfaction. Although some of the expressions were somewhat ambiguous, the whig party was relieved from anxiety by the general tone and sentiments of the address; and confidence was felt that the president would co-operate with the majority of Congress in carrying out the views and desires of those by whom he had been elected. There were those, however, among the prominent whigs (of whom the late Hon. Samuel L. Southard, of New Jersey, and then president of the senate *pro tem.*, was one), who had long known Mr. Tyler, and carefully observed his course in the councils of the nation, who apprehended that he would carry with him into the presidency his peculiar notions of a strict construction of the constitution, imbibed in the Virginia school of democracy, involving principles which, if carried out, would prove repugnant to the views of public policy entertained by the whig party, and defeat measures which they deemed necessary to restore the prosperity of the country. Nor were these apprehensions allayed, even when Mr. Tyler was understood to have said, on his arrival at Washington, after the death of Harrison, "You have but exchanged one whig for another."

The cabinet which had been appointed by General Harrison, was retained by President Tyler, namely, Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts, secretary of state; Thomas Ewing, of Ohio, secretary of the treasury; John Bell, of Tennessee, secretary of war; George E. Badger, of North Carolina, secretary of the navy; Francis Granger, of New York, postmaster-general; John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, attorney-general. The retention of this cabinet, distinguished for its ability and for its possession of the confidence of the whig party, tended to confirm the feelings of hope and confidence inspired by the inaugural address of President Tyler.

In conformity with the general feelings of sorrow and regret which pervaded the public mind on the death of the chief magistrate of the nation, his successor recommended a day of fasting and prayer, to be observed by the people of the United States.

In entering upon the duties of the office of president, Mr. Tyler did not feel (to use his own words, in his message to Congress) that it would be becoming in him to disturb what had been ordered by his lamented predecessor. He therefore concurred in the measure which had been adopted by President Harrison, of convening Congress in extra session on the 31st of May. "His own first wish," he stated, "in the circumstances in which he was so unexpectedly placed, would have been, to have called to his aid, in the administration of public affairs, the combined wisdom of the two houses of Congress, in order to take their counsel and advice as to the best mode of extricating the government and the country from the embarrassments weighing heavily on both."

After the call of the extra session, and previous to the meeting, members of Congress were elected in the states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. The state of Mississippi was not represented at the extra session, as no special election was ordered, and the annual election in that state took place in the month of November following. The members from Illinois were elected at the annual election in August, and took their seats in the house during the session.

The result of the elections at this time were equally favorable to the whig party with those which took place in 1840, immediately preceding the presidential election. The majority in favor of the new administration in the 27th Congress, according to the returns of members elect, was seven in the senate, and one vacancy; and about fifty in the house of representatives.

The hopes of the democratic incumbents in office, which were awakened on the accession of Mr. Tyler to the presidency, were soon dissipated by the course he felt bound to pursue with regard to removals and appointments. The applications and importunities of office-seekers, which had commenced immediately after the inauguration of President Harrison, and which were temporarily suspended by his death, were renewed with increased vigor after his successor was invested with the power and patronage of the executive. A few days only had transpired after his accession, when the removal of the friends of the late administration from office was commenced by the new president; and their places were filled by whigs and conservatives. The removals and appointments continued to follow each other in rapid succession, and a similar course was pursued by the postmaster-general, with the sanction of the president, with respect to the numerous postmasters throughout the Union. President Tyler thus showed a disposition to gratify the desires and expectations of his political friends, with regard to office, even before the senate had an opportunity to act on the subject.

A brief review and notice of political parties in the United States, at this period, is deemed appropriate in this place, for the purpose of showing the position of the president and the new administration, with regard to measures of public policy and the course of events.

We have seen, in the sketches already given of various administrations, that the federal party which was thrown into the minority on the accession of Jefferson, and continued in opposition to the administration of that president, and that of his successor, Mr. Madison, became extinct, as a national party, soon after the termination of the war with Great Britain in 1815. In some of the states the name was kept up for a short period, but after a few feeble struggles the name of federalist became so unpopular that it was abandoned during the administration of President Monroe, whose management of the affairs of the nation was so satisfactory to all parties, that opposition for a time ceased. The parties which were subsequently formed for the support of Adams, Jackson, Crawford, and Clay, for the presidency, were more of a personal character than marked by distinct political principles ; those who had been called federalists as well as democrats being found among the adherents of each of those candidates for the presidency. When General Jackson was elected president, his supporters claimed the name of democrats, and his opponents at first called themselves national republicans, but when joined by seceders from the administration ranks, in 1833 and '34, they took the name of whigs. Thus the two great national parties which divided the country at the accession of Mr. Van Buren to the president, in 1837, were respectively known by the name of democrats and whigs. With the latter, several minor parties of more limited extent, or local in character, generally acted, and the greater portion of these parties gradually became amalgamated with, and formed part of, the whig party. Such were the anti-masons of the middle and eastern states; the state-rights men of the south who disapproved of the removal of the public deposites from the United States bank, and other acts of General Jackson; and those supporters of General Jackson in Tennessee, Georgia, and other states, who were opposed to Mr. Van Buren as his successor.

The party called democratic, which supported the administration of General Jackson, and Mr. Van Buren as his successor, became themselves divided, particularly in the northern and middle states, even previous to the election of the latter to the presidency. In 1835, there arose in the city of New York, in the ranks of the democratic party, a combination in opposition to banks and other moneyed institutions, which afterward took the name of locofocos, or equal-rights party. The working-men's party, which arose in the cities of New York and Philadelphia, in 1829, and dissolved in about two years afterward, was the progenitor, to some extent, of the locofoco or equal-rights party. Certain it is, that most of the measures advocated by the former (some of which were introduced into the United States from Great Britain, by Mr. Robert Dale Owen and Miss Frances Wright, who for some time published a newspaper in New York, called "The Free Enquirer") were decidedly popular with the latter, and both were equally hostile to banks, and other moneyed institutions, which they considered monopolies. Nevertheless, it was Andrew Jackson, in his contest with the bank of the United States, who enkindled the highest opposition in that direction, and the enthusiasm which he excited against the national bank soon extended itself to state banks. The New York election of 1834, with the strong pledge against monopolies which the candidates for members of Congress and the legislature, of the democratic party in that city, were required to sign, together with speeches and resolutions of the same character, at political meetings, as well as the circumstances previously mentioned, all combined to plant deeply in the minds of that party the seeds of hostility to monopolies. Consequently, the democratic party became divided within itself. On the one side (in favor of banks and other corporations) were the great majority of the leading men of the party, and nearly all the office-holders under the general, state, and city administrations; on the other, comprising then but a small section, composed principally of mechanics and other working-men, were those calling themselves free-trade, anti-monopoly, hard-money men.*

The equal-rights party at first deemed it advisable to exercise great caution and secrecy in their movements. It required both moral and physical courage to attack the usages and organization of the democratic party, which were then controlled by those favorable to banking institutions. But at the election in the city of New York, for a member of Congress and members of the legislature, in the autumn of 1835, it was determined to oppose the nomination of certain persons who were brought forward by the friends of banks.

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* Byrdsall's History of the Locofoco or Equal-Rights Party.

At a meeting on the evening of the 29th of October, 1835, of the democratic party, at Tammany Hall (the usual place of such meetings), for the purpose of adopting a ticket to be supported at the approaching election, opposition was made by the anti-bank portion of the meeting, to certain names on the ticket. A struggle took place for the chair, between the two sections of the party; but the friends of banks having placed their leader in the chair, and declared their ticket and resolutions adopted, attempted to adjourn the meeting and put out the lights. Their opponents being prepared for the occasion, by means of *locofoco* matches carried with them for the purpose, instantly restored the light in the room, placed their leader in the chair, adopted an equal-rights democratic ticket, and passed sundry resolutions against banks and paper-money, avowing themselves in favor of gold and silver as the only circulating medium of the country.

Thus was formed a new party, the supporters of which were forthwith denominated by their opponents, "locofocos," a name which was gradually extended to the entire democratic party of the Union. Although this new section of the party was at first inconsiderable in number, giving but about four thousand votes at the election in the city of New York in 1835, apprehensions were entertained by the leading men of the democratic party, that the principles thus avowed might extend in their ranks, and cause disunion and defeat to the friends of the administration of Jackson and Van Buren. Efforts were therefore made to conciliate the equal-rights party, and prevent their separation from the ranks of the democracy. Their favorite candidate for president, Colonel Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, was nominated for vice-president on the ticket with Mr. Van Buren, and elected to that office by the friends of the latter. Numerous banks were incorporated by the democratic majority in the legislature of the state of New York, as well as several other states, in the year 1836, after which a pause took place in chartering those institutions; which cessation of bank-making, however, was partly occasioned by the pecuniary embarrassments which overtook the concerns of the country in 1837.

The recommendation of a separation of the financial concerns of the United States government from the state banks, brought forward by President Van Buren, in his message at the extra session of Congress in 1837, created a division in the ranks of the supporters of his administration, which was first exhibited in Congress, but soon extended among the people. Those democrats who were opposed to an exclusive specie currency, and the sub-treasury scheme recommended by Mr. Van Buren, and those in favor of banks as depositories of the public moneys, became a distinct section of the party, and were called "conservatives." Those who adhered to these views eventually joined the whigs, in opposition to Mr. Van

Buren's administration, and in 1840 aided in the election of Harrison and Tyler.

With regard to the state-rights men, or those originally attached to the democratic party, who had disapproved of the removal of the deposites from the bank of the United States, and some other acts of General Jackson; most of them opposed the administration of Mr. Van Buren, and eventually amalgamated with the whig party. A considerable portion of the state-rights men, however, among whom was Mr. John C. Calhoun, and a majority of the people of South Carolina, left the whigs, soon after the accession of Mr. Van Buren to the presidency, and became supporters of his administration, particularly sustaining his views respecting the sub-treasury and other currency measures. Consequently, the vote of South Carolina was given to Mr. Van Buren, when he was a candidate for re-election to the presidency, in 1840.

The election of 1840, which elevated General Harrison and Mr. Tyler to power, was effected by the joint efforts of the whigs and conservatives, the latter, for all practical purposes, becoming merged in the whig party. The party which supported the re-election of Mr. Van Buren in 1840, calling themselves democrats, while their opponents gave them the name of locofocos, were then united throughout the country in advocating the measures of Mr. Van Buren's administration, particularly his recommendation of a sub-treasury, or the separation of the national funds from the state banks, and the collection of the public revenues in gold and silver.

After his nomination for vice-president, in 1840, and previous to the election, Mr. Tyler avowed himself a firm and decided whig, stating that on the subjects of Mr. Clay's compromise tariff law then in operation, which he considered a protective tariff, and the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands among the states, he concurred with Mr. Clay and General Harrison. On the subject of a national bank, he said, in a letter replying to one from the democratic citizens of Steubenville, in October, 1840: "My opinion of the power of Congress to charter a bank of the United States remains unchanged. There is not in the constitution any express grant of power for such a purpose, and it never could be constitutional to exercise that power, save in the event that the powers granted to Congress could not be carried out without resorting to such an institution." In another letter to several citizens of Henrico county, Virginia, dated in October, 1840, he remarked: "My votes are repeatedly recorded on the journals of Congress, against the power of Congress over the subject of internal improvement, in all its phases and aspects, as well in regard to roads and canals, as to harbors and rivers. The first, viz., appropriations to roads and canals, have well nigh entirely ceased, while annual appropriations, to a large amount, have been made to harbors and rivers, with the sanction and approval of the president of the United States."

The twenty-seventh Congress met in extra session, on the 31st day of May, 1841. The session closed on the 13th of September following. John White, a whig member from Kentucky, was elected speaker of the house of representatives, having received on the first vote, *viva voce*, 121 votes, against 84 for John W. Jones, of Virginia (democrat), and 16 scattering. In the senate, as already stated, there was also a decided majority in favor of the administration.

A committee of the house being proposed to join one from the senate, as usual, to wait on the president of the United States, and inform him that a quorum of the two houses had assembled, and that Congress was ready to proceed to business, &c., Mr. M'Keon, of New York, moved to amend the resolution appointing the committee, by striking out the word "president," and inserting the words "vice-president, now occupying the office of president of the United States." This motion Mr. M'Keon supported in a constitutional argument, which was replied to by Mr. Wise, of Virginia, and the amendment was rejected, and the original resolution adopted, by which the house recognised John Tyler as president of the United States.

The message of the president was generally well received by the friends of the new administration. Though cautiously worded on the subject of a national bank, and somewhat ambiguous as to his own views with regard to such an institution, it was believed that he would sanction any bill that might receive the support of a majority of both houses of Congress, for the incorporation of a bank or fiscal agent, for the regulation of the currency, and for managing the funds of the government.

At the opening of the session, the president's message was accompanied by the report of the secretary of the treasury. This paper earnestly recommended the establishment of a bank. It added : "If such an institution can be so conceived in principle and guarded in its details as to remove all scruples touching the question of constitutional power, and thus avoid the objections which have been urged against those heretofore created by Congress, it will, in the opinion of the undersigned, produce the happiest results, and confer lasting and important benefits on the country."

The bank was thus brought distinctly to the consideration of Congress, both by the president and the secretary.

The president was desirous that Congress should call on the secretary to report a plan for a bank. He expressed this wish to more than one member, immediately upon the opening of the session ; in fact, invited the call. Mr. Wise, his confidential friend, introduced a resolution to this end into the house, on the 3d of June. Mr. Clay did the same thing in the senate, on the 7th of June.

On the 12th of June, the secretary, Mr. Ewing, made his report, and with it a bill for the incorporation of "The Fiscal Bank of the United States."

This bill was represented by the secretary as creating an institution, in the general plan and frame of which he had endeavored to free it from the constitutional objections which have been urged against those heretofore created by Congress.

This plan accordingly differed from the former bank of the United States in two essential characteristics—both of which, it was understood, were introduced upon Mr. Tyler's suggestion, and in deference to his peculiar views of the constitution.

First, it proposed a bank to be incorporated in the District of Columbia.

Second, it was to have the power to establish branches only with the assent of the states.

Many provisions were made to guard against the abuses which were known or alleged to have crept into the former banks.*

The amount of capital named was thirty millions of dollars; in other respects—in privilege of discount and exchange, &c.—the institution proposed was similar to the two former banks incorporated by Congress.

This plan of a national bank proposed by the secretary of the treasury, received the approbation of every member of the cabinet, as the only plan which would be likely to succeed, considering the opinions of the acting president. Mr. Webster afterward remarked, that "it was the part of wisdom, not to see how much of a case they could make out against the president, but how they could get on as well as they might with the president." Mr. Wise, a confidential friend of the president, in a letter written after the extra session, observed, that "the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Ewing himself, proposed a plan which he recommended to Congress as one which would conduct our finances and commerce, equalize exchanges, regulate currency, and avoid all constitutional difficulties. This was the very desideratum, if it was what he described it to be, and this was emphatically, by a whig administration recommendation from the proper department, said to be acquiesced in by the president, and it was called for by both houses of Congress. It was justly regarded as the whig measure of the first moment, and would as such have been met and treated doubtless by the opposition or Van Buren party."

Mr. Ewing's report and bill were referred in the senate to the select committee on the currency, of which Mr. Clay was chairman. That committee reported, on the 21st of June, a bill in all essential features the same as that proposed by the secretary of the treasury and supposed to have been approved by the president, with one exception. That exception regarded the establishment of branches.

The bank, on this plan, as well as in the other, was to be situated in the District of Columbia (at Washington city); it was to have the same capital of thirty millions—with a provision for future increase, if Congress should think it advisable, to fifty millions.

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* Kennedy's Defence of the Twenty-seventh Congress.

It provided for a government subscription of ten millions, instead of the secretary's six; and it dispensed with the fourth instalment of the surplus revenue, amounting to upward of nine millions, which the secretary's bill proposed to make part of the capital. It allowed dividends as high as seven per cent.; the other restricted them to six; it gave nine paid directors, and required a majority to transact business: the executive scheme proposed seven paid directors, and three a quorum for business. It was somewhat more stringent in its regulations than the bill of the executive; among other particulars, in these:—

It forbade the appointment of any member of Congress, or of a state legislature, or officer or contractor of the federal or state governments, as a director in the bank or its branches:

It forbade all discounting within the District of Columbia, or loans, except to the government:

It gave additional powers to facilitate free examination of the bank by the secretary of the treasury:

It added restrictions to the use, and guards against the abuse, of proxies:

It forbade the officers from borrowing money or obtaining discounts from the bank, or contracting debts with it.

In these and sundry other particulars, the senate bill was more guarded and restrained than the executive bill.

These diversities between the two schemes mainly respect the efficiency of the proposed institution. They did not touch any debatable question of constitutional power.

Such a question of constitutional power, and the only one, was presented in the clause relating to the establishment of branches. In all other points the bills are the same in principle, and with very little variation, coincident in detail—almost identical in phraseology.

On this point of establishment of branches—the 16th fundamental rule in each bill—the senate plan differed from that of the executive, to the following extent:—

The executive bill authorized the corporation to establish a bank for discount and deposite, in any state whose legislature should give its assent to such an act; such branch being once established, not to be withdrawn without the assent of Congress: or, instead of establishing such office, the directors were authorized, from time to time, to employ any individual agent, or bank—with the approbation of the secretary of the treasury—at any place, to transact the business of the bank, other than for the purposes of discount.

The senate bill, first made it *obligatory* upon the corporation to establish an office of discount and deposite, in any state in which two thousand shares should have been subscribed, whenever, upon the application of the legislature of such state, Congress should require the same; second, the directors were authorized to establish such offices in any state or territory, whenever they should think it expedient, without the assent of the legislature ; third, or instead of establishing such offices, to employ an agent or bank, to be approved by the secretary of the treasury—at any place—to transact the business of the bank. other than for the purposes of discount. This latter clause being to the same effect as that in the executive bill.

The above is a view of the two provisions. It will be seen how very narrow was the difference between Mr. Tyler's proposition and Mr. Clay's ; a difference, so far as constitutional power was concerned, that rested upon the naked alternative of—

Branches to be established *originally* with the assent of the states, and that assent, once given, to be irrevocable ; or branches to be established when and where found convenient, without that *original* assent.

The president maintained in vindication of the principle inserted in his bill, that although he could find power in the constitution to establish a bank, he could find none to establish a branch ; that to get this absent power, it was necessary that Congress should apply to each state for a grant of it.

Mr. Clay, on the other hand, held that if the constitution did not give the power to establish a branch, no assent of a state could give it, and, therefore, that it was unconstitutional to attempt to derive power from the assent of a state.

Upon this logic, a division of opinion arose in Congress ; not as to which of those positions was the sound one. It was believed there was not a man in either house who honestly and sincerely held with the president. But the question which now divided Congress was—Can not the president be gratified as to this notion of his regarding the assent of the states ? Can not Congress, if it finds motive to do so, as a matter of expediency merely, waive and forego its right to establish a branch, and ordain that that right shall not be exercised except in such case as when a state may express a wish for a branch ?

Upon this point, there was a very general, perhaps unanimous, concurrence of the whig party in the affirmative. Is it expedient to establish such a precedent ? May it not be used, hereafter, to the prejudice of good legislation ? On this point there was less unanimity. Some members were strongly opposed. Then it was suggested that the power might be waived, with a protestation. Many other suggestions were made, evincing great solicitude to comply with the president's wish, if possible.

The difficulty was, at last, thought to be settled by a compromise ; to which, it was reported, the president had agreed. There was great repugnance to it among the whig members, but it was finally agreed to, because the majority thought the president wished it.

The compromise was this: The directors to have power to establish a branch with the assent of the state, and when established, not to be withdrawn without the consent of Congress: provided, first, that the power to establish a branch shall be unrestrained, in respect to any state which shall not, at the first session of its legislature, after the passage of the charter, express its dissent; in defect of which, assent shall be presumed. And provided, second, that whenever Congress shall deem it necessary and proper to the execution of powers granted by the constitution, to establish a branch in any state, then Congress may require the directors to establish such branch.

The compromise being thus arranged in conformity, as it was supposed, with the president's views, it was incorporated in the bill, and the whigs then hastened to pass it. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the president ever gave any distinct promise to accept the compromise, although such a belief was prevalent.*

The bill incorporating the fiscal bank was finally passed by Congress on the 6th of August, and sent to the president for his decision. The vote in the senate, where the bill originated, was 26 ayes to 23 noes; in the house of representatives, 128 ayes to 97 noes. The president retained the bill until the 16th of August, and during this interval the greatest anxiety prevailed among the whigs, with regard to the course he might conclude to pursue. The president's house was filled with visiters from the ranks of the opposition, some of whom became his intimate advisers. When the whigs learned that he complained that they kept aloof from him, and thinking it their duty to do everything in their power to avert the threatened veto, they waited upon him in delegations, to apprize him of the feeling which was likely to arise in the country upon this act. One delegation in particular, of great respectability—the whigs representing Ohio—called upon him on Friday evening, the 13th of August. They told him frankly what they feared; assured him of the earnest desire of the party to preserve harmony and good will toward the president: represented to him the deep concern of the nation in the bank question. He protested his own intense feeling upon the subject; spoke apparently with frankness of the difficulties he felt in regard to certain points in the compromise section; suggested an amendment which would render this section acceptable to him; declared his entire freedom from all prejudice or extrinsic influence in regard to the measure; wept; promised to pray for guidance; and then asked, by way of remonstrance: "Why did you not send me Ewing's bill?"

"Would you sign that bill?" inquired one of the delegation.

"I would," was the reply.

Such was the interview, as described by those who witnessed it. The Ohio members left his apartment fully possessed with the opinion that the president was sincerely desirous to have a bank such as his cabinet minister had reported. Although they had reason to expect a veto of the pending bill, they believed that all difficulty would be removed by adopting the president's plan as it came from the secretary. This opinion they infused into the whigs of Congress; and the hopes of a favorable settlement of the question began to brighten among them. Subsequently the president informed one of the Ohio delegation that he wished to recall what he had said respecting Mr. Ewing's bill, which he declared that he had not read when he said that he would sign it if it were sent to him. He now said that he could not sign that, but added, "If you will examine the message [veto] I have sent to-day, you will find shadowed forth a much better bank there, one that has been long endeared to me."*

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* Kennedy.

During the time while the president held the bank bill under consideration, among other friends who urged him to allow the bill to become a law, Mr. Botts, of Virginia, wrote him a confidential and respectful letter on the 10th of August, from which we make the following extracts:—

"It is generally understood that you are to veto the bank bill. If it be so, have you contemplated the consequence, in all its bearings? Can your cabinet sustain you in the veto. Will they not be compelled to resign? For whatever may be your views as to the principles upon which you came into power, it can not be denied that those on which they have been sustained by the country require at their hands an earnest support of the measure that has been demanded by the people through their representatives, by a majority exceeding the entire representation of Virginia and South Carolina, the two states in which the strongest opposition is supposed to exist.

"The sub-treasury is repealed; and the deposite system of 1836 is also repealed in one house, and will pass the other. Congress will not consent to take the plan suggested by the secretary of the treasury. Will you not find it impossible to carry on the government, and will not a resignation be forced upon you?

"On the contrary, if you can reconcile this bill to yourself, all is sunshine and calm. Your administration will meet with the warm, hearty, zealous support of the whole whig party, and you will retire from the great theatre of national politics with the thanks, and plaudits, and approbation of your countrymen."

Three days after his interview with the Ohio delegation, President Tyler sent the bank bill back to the senate, in which it originated, with his veto message.

So far as this act signified his dissent from the senate bill, it surprised nobody. The recent reports, especially that from the Ohio delegation, had prepared Congress to expect it. But the substance of the message, and the grounds upon which it placed the veto, greatly surprised that body—excepting only those who were in the secret.

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* Kennedy.

The message presents four objections to the bill:—

First, that it is an attempt to create a bank to operate *per se* over the Union—and therefore unconstitutional.

Second, that it is a bank of discount—and therefore unconstitutional.

Third, that it was not a bank exclusively confined to the power of dealing in exchanges, which would be constitutional and eminently useful, if conducted on the plan of the exchange operations of the old bank.

Fourth, that the assent of the states toward establishing branches was not sufficiently secured.

The first three of these objections apply as forcibly to Mr. Ewing's bill as to that from the senate.

The bank proposed by the secretary was more distinctly a bank of local discount than the senate bank; for the latter absolutely forbade discounting in the District of Columbia, which the other allowed. The discount power was as large in the secretary's plan as in the old bank. Then as to dealing in exchange, Mr. Ewing's plan encouraged it no more than the other, but left this faculty much where it was in the former charter. The fourth objection is peculiar to the senate's bill; yet here the difference hangs by a cobweb.*

Yet, according to the evidence of Mr. Wise, and other friends of the executive, Mr. Ewing's bill had been adopted by the president and his cabinet as a compromise of the vexed question.

The veto message completely bewildered the whig members of Congress, and was received with dismay and anxiety by the friends of the administration throughout the country. Immediate efforts were made by the leading whigs in Congress, and the members of the cabinet, to repair, if possible, the evil effects which threatened the party with distraction and dissolution.

A hope yet remained. The president had shadowed out a plan in his veto message, which, as he remarked to a member from Ohio, was a plan long endeared to him. The message was examined, and it occurred at once to every one, upon reading his commendation of the exchange operations of the old bank, that the plan shadowed forth in that document was a bank to be constructed with reference to such dealings in exchanges as were described to be so beneficial to the country in the old bank, and which should be disabled from dealing in local discounts.

To make sure of the president's concurrence in this matter, two gentlemen of the highest standing in Congress—Mr. Berrien, of the senate, and Mr. Sergeant, of the house—were deputed by the whigs to ascertain from him precisely what kind of a bill he would feel himself authorized to approve.

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* Kennedy

They executed their commission with great fidelity; had an interview with the president; learned from him that he was in favor of a fiscal agent divested of the discounting power, and limited to dealing in bills of exchange, other than those drawn by a citizen of one state upon another citizen of the same state. A bill was prepared in conformity with these suggestions. It was submitted to Mr. Webster, and by him to the president; was approved, and sent to the house of representatives; reported there, and passed.

The interview of Messrs. Berrien and Sergeant with the president was on the 18th of August. The bill was prepared on the 19th, and submitted to the president, and approved by him. It was then returned to Mr. Sergeant, who, on Friday, the 20th, introduced it into the house as an amendment to a bill then pending in committee of the whole.* It was entitled, "An act to provide for the better collection, safekeeping, and disbursement of the public revenue, by means of a corporation to be styled the fiscal corporation of the United States." The name of bank was omitted in conformity with the wishes of the president.†

On Monday, the 23d of August, at 4 o'clock, the bill was taken out of committee, and passed, without the alteration of a word from the original report, by a vote of 125 to 94. It was passed in the senate, 27 to 22, without amendment, on Friday, the 3d of September.

In the meantime, several important measures proposed by the whigs in Congress, had been adopted in both branches, and received the approbation of the president. On the 17th of August, the day after his veto of the fiscal bank bill, the president informed Congress that he had signed the bill repealing the sub-treasury law; and on the 18th a bill, which had previously passed the senate, 26 to 23, to establish a uniform system of bankruptcy throughout the United States, was passed in the house of representatives, by a vote of 110 to 106; the votes of the democratic party in both houses, with very few exceptions, being in the negative. This bill, which was considered a prominent whig measure, was called for by an immense number of petitioners throughout the United States, embracing many of the largest capitalists and of the most intelligent among the commercial community, as well as those who were classed among the unfortunate, in consequence of the vicissitudes of trade. The want of a uniform bankrupt law had been seriously felt for nearly forty years, during which the country had been without a system; particularly by that portion of citizens who were engaged in mercantile pursuits, whether creditors or debtors.

While the bill to establish the fiscal corporation was pending in the house of representatives, an event occurred, which probably had an important influence on the mind of the president in determining his subsequent action on that measure, and produced the most disastrous effects on the prospects of the whig party and the administration of Mr. Tyler. On the 21st of August, the following copy of a letter from Hon. John M. Botts, a distinguished whig member of Congress, representing the Richmond district of Virginia, in the house of representatives, appeared in the Madisonian, the official executive paper at Washington. It was accompanied with a notice by the editor, stating that it was forwarded to him late the previous evening, as having been written by the author, for the *Coffeehouse*, at Richmond, where such scraps of news are made as public as at an exchange of a commercial city. " Under any other circumstances," the editor remarked, " we should not have felt authorized to publish it. Forewarned, Mr. Tyler will be forearmed. We shall see whether Mr. Botts, and such as he, will succeed in ' heading' him—whether they will perpetrate a legislative fraud, such as the letter describes, for the heartless purpose of ' fastening' Mr. Tyler, and forcing him into a measure which neither his conscience sanctions, nor his judgment approves."

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* Kennedy's Defence of the Twenty-seventh Congress.

† Mr. Ewing's Letter, in Niles's Register, vol. lxi., p. 34.

" AUGUST 16, 1841.

" DEAR SIR : The president has finally resolved to veto the bank bill. It will be sent in to-day at 12 o'clock. It is impossible to tell precisely on what ground it will be placed. He has turned, and twisted, and changed his ground so often in his conversations, that it is difficult to conjecture which of the absurdities he will rest his veto upon.

" In the last conversation reported, he said his only objection was to that provision which presumed the assent of the states when no opinion was expressed, and if that was struck out, he would sign the bill. He had no objection to the location of branches by the directors, in the absence of dissent expressed, but whenever it was expressed, the power to discount promissory notes must cease, although the agency might continue, for the purchase and sale of foreign exchange. However, you will see the message.

" Our Captain Tyler is making a desperate effort to set himself up with the locofocos, but he'll be headed yet, and I regret to say, it will end badly for him. He will be an object of execration with both parties ; with the one, for vetoing our bill, which was bad enough—with the other, for signing a worse one ; but he is hardly entitled to sympathy. He has refused to listen to the admonition and entreaties of his best friends, and looked only to the whisperings of ambitious and designing mischief-makers who have collected around him.

The veto will be received without a word, laid on the table, and ordered to be printed. To-night we must and will settle matters, as quietly as possible, but they must be settled.

" Yours, &c., " JNO. M. BOTTS.

" You'll get a bank bill, I think, but one that will serve only to fasten him, and to which no stock will be subscribed ; and when he finds ou that he is not wiser in banking than all the rest of the world, we may get a better. The excitement here is tremendous, but it will be smothered for the present."

The above letter was postmarked "Washington, 16th August," and addressed to "Coffeehouse, Richmond. (Free.) Jno. M. Botts."

In explanation of this letter, Mr. Botts published an address to the public, in which he states that the former was written under strong feelings of indignation at the president's course, and was intended as a private letter to Mr. Lynch, proprietor of the Coffeehouse, Richmond (a reading and news-room); that it was inadvertently directed to the Coffeehouse, instead of Mr. James H. Lynch. This private letter was published without the authority either of the writer or of the individual to whom it was written. Mr. Botts denied the correctness of the inference and construction put upon certain expressions in this letter by the president and his friends.

The secretary of the treasury, Mr. Ewing, in his letter of resignation to the president, remarks: "No doubt was thrown out on the subject [of the fiscal corporation bill] by you, in my hearing, or within my knowledge, until the letter of Mr. Botts came to your hands. Soon after the reading of that letter, you threw out strong intimations that you would veto the bill if it were not postponed. That letter I did and do most unequivocally condemn, but it did not affect the constitutionality of the bill, or justify you in rejecting it on that ground; it could affect only the expediency of your action, and whatever you may now believe as to the scruples existing in your mind; in this and in a kindred source there is strong ground to believe they have their origin."*

Mr. Webster, in a letter to the two senators from Massachusetts, dated on the 25th of August, remarks: "I know that the president had been greatly troubled, in regard to the former bill, being desirous, on one hand, to meet the wishes of his friends, if he could, and on the other, to do justice to his own opinions.

"Having returned this first bill, with objections, a new one was presented to the house, and appeared to be making rapid progress.

"I know the president regretted this, and wished the whole subject might have been postponed. At the same time I believed he was disposed to consider calmly and conscientiously, whatever other measure might be presented to him. I have not the slightest doubt that the present bill was honestly and fairly intended as a measure likely to meet the president's approbation. I do not believe that one in fifty of the whigs had any sinister design whatever, if there was an individual who had such design.

"But in the meantime Mr. Botts's very extraordinary letter made its appearance. Mr. Botts is a whig of eminence and influence in our ranks.

* Niles's Register, vol. lxi., p. 34.

I need not recall to your mind the contents of that letter. It is enough to say that it purported that the whigs designed to circumvent their own president, to 'head him,' as the expression was, and to place him in a condition of embarrassment.

"From that moment, I felt that it was the duty of the whigs to forbear from pressing the bank bill further at the present time.

"I thought it was but just in them to give decisive proof that they entertained no such purpose as seemed to be imputed to them. And since there was reason to believe that the president would be glad of time, for information and reflection, before being called on to form an opinion on another plan for a bank—a plan somewhat new to the country—I thought his known wishes ought to be complied with. I think so still. I think this is a course just to the president, and wise on behalf of the whig party.

"A decisive rebuke ought, in my judgment, to be given to the intimation, from whatever quarter, of a disposition among the whigs to embarrass the president. This is the main ground of my opinion; and such a rebuke, I think, would be found in the general resolution of the party to postpone further proceedings on the subject to the next session, now only a little more than three months off.

"The session has been fruitful of important acts. The wants of the treasury have been supplied; provisions have been made for fortifications, and for the navy; the repeal of the sub-treasury has passed; the bankrupt bill, that great measure of justice and benevolence, has been carried through; and the land bill seems about to receive the sanction of Congress.

"In all these measures, forming a mass of legislation more important, I will venture to say, than all the proceedings of Congress for many years past, the president has cordially concurred.

"I agree, that the currency question is, nevertheless, the great question before the country; but considering what has already been accomplished, in regard to other things; considering the difference of opinion which exists upon this remaining one; and considering, especially, that it is the duty of the whigs effectually to repel and put down any supposition that they are endeavoring to put the president in a condition in which he must act under restraint or embarrassment, I am fully and entirely persuaded that the bank subject should be postponed to the next session.

"I am, gentlemen, your friend and obedient servant,

"DANIEL WEBSTER."*

On the 9th of September, six days after its passage in Congress, the president returned the fiscal corporation bill to the house of representatives, where it originated, with his objections. The following day it was taken up in the house, and after debate, 103 members voted in the affirmative, and 80 in the negative; consequently the bill was lost, two thirds not voting for it. The fiscal bank bill which was returned to the senate on the 16th of August, it having originated in that body, was lost also, for want of a two-third vote. On that bill, when returned, the vote of the senate was 25 ayes, to 25 noes

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* Niles's Register, vol. lxi., p. 55.

The Hon. N. P. Tallmadge, one of the senators from the state of New York, endeavored, on each occasion, to induce the president to withhold his veto on the bank question. Being on the most intimate and confidential terms with President Tyler, he, on the 9th of September, addressed him a respectful letter, in which he urged, with great ability, the importance to himself, the party, and the country, of his approval of the fiscal corporation bill. He warned him of the fatal consequences which would result from a second veto. He remarked : " The public mind is too much excited to receive another veto, without the most unequivocal manifestations of disapprobation, not to say indignation. Such feelings existed, but were suppressed, on the former occasion, because it was seen that Congress was making a great and mighty effort to recover from the blow which that message inflicted—a blow the more severe and the less to be resisted, because inflicted by a friend—by him too who had come into power with the rich legacy of the lamented Harrison—namely, ' to understand and carry out the true principles of the government,' of which this measure was the leading one. These feelings can not longer be suppressed, after another exercise of the veto power on the present bill. *That bill, it is well understood, was prepared in pursuance of your suggestions, after full consultation with your cabinet, and with other gentlemen ; and its provisions made to conform to your views*, and with the unequivocal understanding that it would meet your approbation.

" It was brought forward, and passed by your friends in Congress, for the purpose of obviating all difficulties on your part, believing, as they did, from most undoubted sources, that its provisions had received your sanction. I can not therefore, for one moment, persuade myself that any credit ought to be given to a rumor of a second veto.

" I will hope that you will seize this occasion to sustain the confidence of the party which placed you where you are ; and that you will, by the approval of this bill, render your administration as popular as you will make the country prosperous, and the people happy.

" Let no hasty opinions which you have expressed against the bill, prevent you from consummating an act so honorable to yourself, so desirable to your party, so important to the country. It is the part of a great man to surmount the obstacles which obstruct the way of smaller men. Washington had his veto of the first bank bill all prepared, with the intention of sending it to Congress ; but that great man changed his purpose at the very last moment, and approved the bill. Is not his example worthy of imitation ? Can you not, ought you not, to exhibit, on this occasion, those high qualities for which he was so distinguished, and which in him commanded the admiration of the whole country? How enviable would be your position! How laudable the ambition to imitate such an example! By your approval of this bill, the most intimate and cordial relations would be preserved between yourself and your political friends—the confidence of the party would be sustained, and we should all have the proud satisfaction of interchanging those reciprocal acts of kindness and good feeling which are the life and soul of all honorable, political associations. May I not hope, then, that this great and patriotic purpose may influence your decision, and that we may all return to our constituents, having by our united action accomplished the great objects for which we were called together, and receive their annunciation of 'Well done, good and faithful servants.'"

The president's vetoes of the two bank bills were of course received with far different feelings by the two political parties into which the country was divided. While the whigs viewed the president's course with indignation, and denounced him as unfaithful to the party which had elevated him to his high station, their democratic opponents in Congress and throughout the country, warmly applauded Mr. Tyler for defeating the plans for a national bank, and numerous meetings of the democracy were held, in which the president was highly commended for his independent course. Care, however, was taken, by the democratic leaders, to prevent any encouragement being held out to Mr. Tyler that he would be acknowledged as the head of the party, or a candidate for re-election. Mr. Van Buren, in a letter to his political friends in New York, on the 5th of September, remarked, that "if Mr. Tyler should complete the work so wisely begun, by disapproving the bill for the creation of a fiscal corporation, he will be entitled to the thanks of the country." The peculiar tone of this letter occasioned a general smile, wherever read.

With regard to public opinion, it was denied by the opposition in Congress that the people had decided in favor of a national bank, by the presidential election of 1840. To this the whigs replied, that the newspaper organs of the late administration displayed at their head, during the contest, the words, "An independent treasury, and no national bank," and the issue thus made was determined against them. That in the election of members of the house of representatives, a majority of about forty of the whole body was elected, composed of known friends of a national bank, and thus the people had decided in favor of such an institution. Mr. Clay, in his speech in the senate on President Tyler's first veto message, said: "It is incontestable that it was the great, absorbing, and controlling question, in all our recent divisions and exertions. I am firmly convinced, and it is my deliberate judgment, that an immense majority, not less than two thirds of the nation, desire such an institution. All doubts in this respect ought to be dispelled, by the recent decisions of the two houses of Congress. I speak of them *as evidence* of popular opinion. In the house of representatives the majority was one hundred and thirty-one to one hundred. If the house had been full, and but for the modification of the sixteenth fundamental condition, there would have been a probable majority of forty-seven. Is it to be believed that this large majority of the immediate representatives of the people, fresh from among them, and to whom the president seemed inclined, in his opening message, to refer this very question, have mistaken the wishes of their constituents?"

In the debate on the second veto, in the house of representatives, Mr. Botts said: "It is certain, that when we came here no doubt was entertained by either party that he [the president] would sign a bank bill: our friends thought so, or it would not have been discussed, as it was, for ten or twelve weeks; the other party thought so, or they would not have gotten up the cry of repeal! repeal! which resounded, not only through the walls of this capitol, but became the watchword of the party throughout the country. But we are now told that we must wait, give time; and it has been intimated by the president that the people are not in favor of a bank! Indeed, sir, the people not in favor of a bank! Why, what evidence is required stronger than that presented? You have a majority of thirty-one voting for this bank, with seven absentees who voted for the first bank, which gives you thirty-eight. Several others, who voted against it, acknowledge their constituents to be in favor of some bank, though they were not satisfied with this, which gives you forty, or upward. Which of those voting for a bank does the president charge with misrepresenting his constituents? None, that we have heard of. Then suppose each member to represent his constituents fairly, and each one to represent sixty thousand persons, which is a reasonable average, and a majority of forty on this floor gives you a majority of two million four hundred thousand of the population of the United States in favor of a bank; and yet we are to be told it is a doubtful question, upon which the people have expressed no opinion!"

The two principal motives attributed to Mr. Tyler as the cause of his vetoes of the bank bills, were, first, his constitutional scruples, with a determination to preserve his character for consistency; and second, having set his heart upon a second term for the presidency, he was charged with endeavoring to ingratiate himself with the democratic party by his bank vetoes, and thus become the candidate of that party for re-election, in 1844. It is evident that his position as a whig president could not be sustained without an abandonment of the peculiar notions and principles he had formerly professed, as a believer in the Virginia doctrines of a strict construction of the constitution. He had argued and voted in Congress against a protective tariff, against the constitutionality of a national bank, and against the constitutionality of internal improvements by the general government; all leading measures proposed and advocated by the whig party, in reference to which a near approach to unanimity prevailed among the whigs throughout the nation, in 1840.

That the opposition party considered Mr. Tyler as occupying a mistaken position, while attempting to act with the whig party, is shown by the debates in Congress, and the language of the opposition press. In the debate on the fiscal corporation bill, in the senate, Mr. Buchanan said: "The president had shown himself a man of mettle, and had not been willing to sacrifice all his old Virginia principles, for the sake of a party from which he differed on almost every great and leading point of policy." The Richmond Enquirer, previous to the first bank veto, said: "Mr. Tyler's *principles*, *duties*, *policy*, *interests*, are all with us [the democrats], if he can only see them. But will he see them? We hope and trust he will not throw himself into the arms of the federal whigs."

The general impression of the whigs appears to have been, that Mr. Tyler, in accepting the nomination of the party for vice-president, gave an implied pledge that he would act with the party in carrying out their views and measures. The author of the work before quoted, "Defence of the Whigs, by a Member of the Twenty-seventh Congress," says: "The mass of the whigs, for the most part, knew very little of Mr. Tyler and his opinions; that they cared less—never contemplating the event of his succession: that as he professed to be the friend of their friend, Mr. Clay—was anxious for his nomination—they had no doubt that he was a whig, and would do the duty of a whig, whatever might betide: that as he had been on the whig ticket for the vice-presidency once before, and came to Harrisburg as a member of the whig convention, he thereby proclaimed himself to be a whig, and could, without dishonor, be nothing else; especially that he could not be a secret enemy to the whigs, and harbor an undivulged purpose in his mind to betray them, if ever they should trust him."

"The only point upon which any anxiety for Mr. Tyler's whig principles was supposed to have a foundation, was upon the question of the bank. In the senate of the United States he had made a mitigated opposition to the bank; an opposition consisting of one part scruple and three parts praise. He had spoken there in terms of warm commendation of the bank, and especially of the beneficence of its exchanges. Then again he said: 'If the constitution authorized its creation, no man, with the experience of the past, could well doubt the propriety of a well-regulated and well-guarded bank.' His inaugural address is very significant in reference to the prevailing doubts: 'The public interest demands that if any war has existed between the government and the currency it shall cease. I shall promptly give my sanction to any constitutional measure which, originating in Congress, shall have for its object the restoration of a sound circulating medium,' &c.

"He had said in private, to several friends, that his opinion on the constitutionality of a bank had undergone a change. Indeed, we infer as much as this from a letter written by him to the Henrico committee during the canvass of 1840. It is clear he could conceive a case in which it might be constitutional. Add to these the expressions contained in the inaugural address, and it is quite apparent that the mind of Mr. Tyler was in a state of transition, at least, on this topic. Nay, that he had absolutely changed, as he told several. The whole whig press throughout the Union, after the inaugural address, proclaimed him as safe upon the bank question; the Madisonian—his peculiar organ—so proclaimed him. Why did he not deny it, and say he was misapprehended?"

The foregoing expresses the views entertained by the whig party generally with regard to the course of Mr. Tyler. On the other hand his confidential friends denied that his conduct was fairly subject to the charge of inconsistency or unfaithfulness to his professions, but that he was actuated only by conscientious motives and a regard for his oft-repeated and unchanged opinions on the bank question. Mr. Rives, in defending the president's first veto, in the senate, said: "There being nothing in the opinions of the fathers and founders of the republican school to induce President Tyler, as a consistent disciple of that school for twenty-five years past, and one who had over and over expressed his conviction of the unconstitutionality of a bank of the United States, to change that opinion, what course but that which he has pursued was left to him when the bill for such a bank was presented for his approval? Who is the individual that by universal consent is recognised as the founder of what the president refers to as 'the republican school?' It is Thomas Jefferson. For however I concur with the senator from Kentucky [Mr. Clay] in paying all homage to the unrivalled virtues and ever-glorious public services of George Washington, I must be permitted to say that he has not generally been considered as belonging to that republican party to which the president alludes."

The president's veto of the fiscal corporation bill, was received with the greatest indignation by the whig party throughout the country. Many regretted that the measure had been urged in Congress after the veto of the first bank bill, but the public disapprobation of the president's conduct was general among those who had been the means of elevating him to the position he now occupied with power and disposition to thwart their wishes.

The first effects of the veto on the whig party were felt at the seat of government. The fiscal corporation bill was returned to Congress on the 9th of September; on Saturday, the 11th, all the members of the cabinet, except Mr. Webster, feeling that all confidence between the president and themselves was gone, resigned. The causes of their resignation were afterward given to the public by Mr. Ewing, secretary of the treasury, Mr. Bell, secretary of war, Mr. Badger, secretary of the navy, and Mr. Crittenden, attorney-general.* Mr. Granger, postmaster-general, did not publish his letter of resignation, but was understood to have concurred with his colleagues, and the advice of his whig friends in Congress, and his resignation followed soon after the other members of the cabinet.

Mr. Webster, having concluded to remain in the cabinet, as secretary of state, addressed a letter, on the 13th of September, to the editors of the National Intelligencer, in which he observed: "Lest any misapprehension should exist as to the reasons which have led me to differ from the course pursued by my late colleagues, I wish to say that I remain, first, because I have seen no sufficient reason for the dissolution of the late cabinet, by the voluntary act of its own members.

"I am perfectly persuaded of the absolute necessity of an institution, under the authority of Congress, to aid revenue and financial operations, and to give the country the blessings of a good currency, and cheap exchanges. Notwithstanding what has passed, I have confidence that the president will co-operate with the legislature in overcoming all difficulties in the attainment of these objects," &c.

In a letter to H. Ketchum, Esq., of New York, dated the 11th of September, Mr. Webster said: "You will have learned that Messrs. Ewing, Bell, Badger, and Crittenden, have resigned their respective offices. Probably Mr. Granger will feel bound to follow the example. This occurrence can hardly cause you the same degree of regret which it has occasioned to me; as they are not only my friends, but persons with whom I had, for some time, a daily official intercourse. I could not partake in this movement.

"It is supposed to be justified, I presume, by the differences which have arisen between the president and Congress, upon the means of establishing a proper fiscal agency, and restoring a sound state of the currency; and collateral matters growing out of these differences. I regret these differences as deeply as any man; but I have not been able to see in what manner the resignation of the cabinet was likely either to remove or mitigate the evils produced by them. On the contrary, my only reliance for a remedy for those evils has been, and is, on the reunion, conciliation, and perseverance of the whole whig party, and I by no means despair of seeing yet accomplished, by these means, all that we desire.

"My particular connexion with the administration, however, is in another department. I think very humbly—none can think more humbly—of the value of the services which I am able to render to the public in that post. But as there is, so far as I know, on all subjects affecting our foreign relations, a concurrence of opinion between the president and myself, and as there is nothing to disturb the harmony of our intercourse, I have not felt it consistent with the duty which I owe to the country, to run the risk, by any sudden or abrupt proceeding, of embarrassing the executive, in regard to subjects, and questions now immediately pending, and which intimately affect the preservation of the peace of the country."

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* See Niles's Register, vol. lxi.

In view of the critical situation of the country at that time, with respect to our relations with Great Britain, particularly on the subject of the northeast boundary question, considerate men of the whig party justified Mr. Webster in his decision to remain in the cabinet, at least until the negotiations then pending were brought to a conclusion. Much difference of opinion prevailed among the whigs as to the policy of the resignation of the other members of the cabinet. It was a current opinion, after the second veto, that the cabinet ought to wait to be turned out. That they should not by a voluntary act abandon their posts. The majority of the cabinet themselves, and many others, thought otherwise. Every sentiment which could move honorable men revolted at the idea of holding a confidential relation where there was no confidence. As regards a portion of the cabinet, the resignation was reluctantly delayed. It was delayed in deference to the advice of those who still hoped that affairs might take some unforeseen turn favorable to harmony. They resigned, however, at last, as they stated, in their own published letters, not because the president differed from them on the question of a bank. They threw up their places because he had forfeited his word, treated them unworthily, and had manifested his hostility to the principles and pledges of the party with whom they were associated, to which he professed to belong, and who had given to him all the consideration and importance incident to his station.*

Feeling deeply the injury which the course of the president had inflicted upon the whig party and their cause, and indignant at the position in which he had placed them, the whig members of Congress held a meeting on the 11th of September, and appointed a committee of three senators and five members of the house, to prepare an address to the people of the United States, with regard to the measures which had been adopted and those which had failed at the extra session, with such other matters as might exhibit the condition and prospects of the whig party. The committee appointed were Messrs. Berrien, of Georgia, Tallmadge, of New York, and Smith, of Indiana, senators; Everett, of Vermont, Mason, of Ohio, Kennedy, of Maryland, John C. Clark, of New York, and Rayner, of North Carolina, on the part of the house. The meeting then adjourned, to meet again on Monday morning.

On Monday, the 13th of September, a few hours previous to the close of the session, as Congress adjourned on that evening, the whig members still remaining at the seat of government—for many had set out for their homes—again assembled, and adopted a manifesto, or address, which was read by Mr. Kennedy, as the report of the committee—of which twenty thousand copies were ordered to be published—by which they proclaimed to the nation, that from that day forth all political alliance between them and John Tyler was at an end; that from that day "those who brought the president into power could no longer, in any manner or degree, be justly held responsible or blamed for the administration of the executive branch of the government." At the same time acknowledging it to be "the duty of the whigs, in and out of Congress, to give to his official acts and measures fair and full consideration, approving them and cooperating in their support when they could, and differing from and opposing any of them only from a high sense of public duty."

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* Kennedy's Defence of the Whigs.

The manifesto was a plain, direct paper, stating the case of the whigs fully to the country. It told what they had done at the extra session; what they had failed to do, and why. It disclosed their observation of the past conduct of Mr. Tyler, and their apprehension of his future course; the withdrawal of his confidence from the whigs, and his affinity with their enemies; and it announced their entire separation from him. It proclaimed the principles upon which the whigs would continue, as in times past, their organization.

This manifesto had the full concurrence and actual participation of from sixty to eighty whig members—being nearly all who were at the seat of government when it was adopted.*

There were many whigs, in and out of Congress, however, who doubted the expediency of adopting the address at that time, and denouncing the president, before further time was given for reflection, and a more full development of his views and intentions. Many hesitated as to the wisdom and propriety of running the risk of throwing the patronage of the general government into the hands of their political opponents, and by driving the president from the whig party, to prevent the probable success of other whig measures during his administration.

It was expected by some that the president would select the members of his new cabinet from the ranks of the democratic party, but he promptly made his appointments of the following distinguished whigs and conservatives, viz: Walter Forward, of Pennsylvania, secretary of the treasury; John M'Lean, of Ohio, secretary of war; Abel P. Upshur, of Virginia, secretary of the navy; Charles A. Wickliffe, of Kentucky, postmaster-general; Hugh S. Legare, of South Carolina, attorney-general. These nominations were all confirmed by the senate, previous to their adjournment. Judge M'Lean declining to resign his seat on the bench of the supreme court, for the office of secretary of war, John C. Spencer, of New York, was appointed to take charge of that department. Thus the new cabinet was organized in a more satisfactory manner to the public than had been anticipated by the whigs; while the hopes of the democrats, which had been raised by the rupture between the president and Congress, were somewhat dampened.

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* Kennedy.

The principal acts passed by Congress at the extra session were the following: Authorizing a loan of twelve millions of dollars, for the purpose of supplying the wants of the treasury on account of deficiencies during Mr. Van Buren's administration; appropriating twenty-five thousand dollars, or one year's salary of the president, for the relief of Mrs. Harrison, widow of the late president; making appropriations for a home squadron; repealing the sub-treasury act; providing for the payment of navy pensions; establishing a uniform system of bankruptcy; reviving and extending the charters of banks in the District of Columbia; appropriating the proceeds of the sales of the public lands, and to grant pre-emption rights; making appropriations for various fortifications, for ordnance, and for preventing and suppressing Indian hostilities; providing for placing Greenough's statue of Washington in the rotunda of the capitol; authorizing the transmission of letters and packets free of postage; and an act relating to duties and drawbacks. The last act was intended to provide for the deficiency of revenue caused by the large number of articles admitted free of duty by the tariff law of 1833; on many of those articles a duty of twenty per cent. was now laid. The act providing for the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands among the several states, was passed substantially according to the plan proposed by Mr. Clay, but a clause introduced by certain opponents of a protective tariff, impaired its efficiency, and in the sequel rendered the law inoperative. The clause referred to provided that when the tariff of duties on imports was raised to a rate above twenty per cent. ad valorem, the distribution should be suspended until this cause be removed. Twenty-five acts and five joint resolutions were passed at this extra session.

Among the appointments confirmed by the senate at this session, were the following: Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, minister to Great Britain; William Hunter (then chargé d'affaires), minister to Brazil; William Boulware, of Virginia, chargé d'affaires to Naples.

Considerable excitement prevailed in the United States during this year, in consequence of the arrest and trial at the circuit court in Utica, in the state of New York, of Alexander M'Leod. He had been a deputy sheriff of Niagara district, in Upper Canada, and was charged with having murdered an American named Amos Durfee, on the 29th of December, 1837, at which time an American steamboat, called the Caroline, was destroyed by a party from Canada, at Fort Schlosser, on the American side of the Niagara river. As it was proved that this party acted under British authority, and the British government having claimed M'Leod as a British subject, an attempt was made by the government of the United States to prevent the trial by the state of New York. Governor Seward, of New York, however, refused to give up the prisoner, and the trial proceeded. Happily, M'Leod was acquitted by the jury, and discharged, and thus a very vexed question between the United States government and a state authority, as to jurisdiction; and thus also was one point of unpleasant altercation between the United States and Great Britain so far settled. The state elections during the summer and fall of 1841, resulted generally unfavorably for the whigs, as might have been expected from the general dissatisfaction felt by that party toward the president, and the renewed spirit and vigor infused thereby into the democratic party. The president and his particular friends considered the result of these elections as a proof that the people approved of his course on the bank question; and after the adjournment of Congress but few of the democratic office-holders were removed by the president.

The second session of the twenty-seventh Congress commenced on the 6th of December, 1841, and continued until the 31st of August, 1842, a period of 269 days, and was the longest congressional session that has ever occurred. During this time, one thousand and ninety-eight reports were made, six hundred and ten bills reported, and two hundred and ninety-nine bills passed, besides about one hundred private bills matured, engrossed, and ready for final passage at the ensuing session, but retained by the house, because the senate were occupied by the treaty and other important subjects. More important business was done by this Congress than by any Congress which ever convened since the formation of the government, although a considerable portion of their time was exhausted in discussing executive vetoes and protests.

The great and leading measure of the session was a new tariff law; by which ample provision was made for the public revenue, and protection afforded to American manufactures and other branches of national industry. This bill was signed by the president, after he had previously returned, with objections, two different tariff bills passed by Congress, the first, the provisional revenue bill, on the 29th of June; the other on the 9th of August, the same bill, in substance, as that which received his signature, except that it contained a clause providing for distributing the proceeds of the public lands. As the president now gave Congress to understand that the distribution clause could not receive his sanction, it was stricken out in the third bill reported in Congress, which, being passed by a close vote in both houses, received the signature of the president, and became a law, by the sacrifice of the land bill passed at the former session, which was thus rendered inoperative. Great indignation was felt and expressed toward the president, by the whigs in Congress, as he had recommended the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, in his first message.

Among other acts of importance passed at this session, was an act for the apportionment of representatives according to the census of 1840; by which the ratio was fixed at 70,680 for each representative, with one additional member for each state having a fraction greater than one moiety of said ratio. By the same bill, representatives were directed to be chosen by single districts. Acts were also passed extending the loan of 1841, for an addition of five millions of dollars thereto; to authorize the issue of treasury-notes; requiring foreign regulations of commerce to be laid annually before Congress; authorizing the construction of a war-steamer for harbor defence; to provide for the armed occupation and settlement of part of East Florida; to provide for publishing an account of the exploring expedition under the command of Lieutenant Wilkes, of the United States navy; amending the act to promote the progress of the useful arts; to provide further remedial justice in the courts of the United States.

It appeared, at the commencement of the session, that neither of the great political parties, in either branch of Congress, was disposed to sustain the president in his peculiar views and policy. Mr. Rives was the only whig in the senate on whose support he could rely, and in the house of representatives not more than five or six whigs could be considered as the peculiar friends of the executive. It was therefore evident that the president had lost the confidence of both parties, and that any attempt to create a third party in his favor would prove a failure. Numerous adventurers, however, seeking office and political preferment, flattered Mr. Tyler with false hopes, assuring him that the people would sustain him, regardless of parties as then organized.

The subject of a national bank was not again acted on by Congress. The secretary of the treasury, Mr. Forward, at the commencement of the session, in compliance with a resolution of the house of representatives, reported a plan of a fiscal agent, or exchequer, for the management of the government finances. This plan was referred to a select committee in each house, and favorable reports were made thereon, by Mr. Tallmadge of the senate, and Mr. Cushing of the house, each accompanied with a bill to establish an exchequer board connected with the treasury department. Neither of these bills, however, received the favorable consideration of Congress, and the scheme of an exchequer was therefore abandoned.

An important treaty was negotiated in 1842, at Washington, between the United States and Great Britain, by which the northeastern boundary was definitely settled, in a manner satisfactory to the states of Maine and Massachusetts, which were most directly interested therein. Lord Ashburton, who was sent a special minister to the United States for that purpose, acted on the part of Great Britain, and Mr. Webster, secretary of state, on the part of the United States. The treaty was ratified by the senate on the 20th of August, 1842, by a vote of 39 to 9. Besides settling the boundary question, it provided for the final suppression of the African slave-trade, and for the giving up of criminals fugitive from justice, in certain cases.

The third session of the twenty-seventh Congress commenced on the 5th of December, 1842, and continued until the expiration of their term, on the 3d of March, 1843. A large number of acts were passed, many of which were of a private nature. Of the numerous public acts passed, but few are of interest to the historical reader. Among them may be named—an act regulating the currency of foreign gold and silver coins; to fix the value of certain foreign moneys at the customhouses; to test the practicability of establishing a system of electro-magnetic telegraphs; providing the means of future intercourse between the United States and the government of China; and to repeal the bankrupt act. This latter law was thus permitted to remain in operation but little more than one year, and was repealed by the same Congress which enacted it.

The twenty-eighth Congress commenced their first session on the 4th of December, 1843, and adjourned on the 17th of June, 1844. There was a large democratic majority in the house of representatives, and on the vote for speaker, John W. Jones (democrat), of Virginia, received 128 votes, against 59 for John White, of Kentucky, the late whig speaker. The whig members protested against the right to seats of the members elected from New Hampshire, Georgia, Mississippi, and Missouri, they not having been chosen by districts, in conformity to the act of the last Congress. The house refused to allow the protest to be read, by a vote of ayes 69, noes 124, and the members referred to were admitted to the seats claimed by them.

The whigs retained a majority in the senate, and in consequence of the disagreement between the two branches of Congress, but few acts of general political interest were passed at this session. Among these may be mentioned—an act making appropriations for certain harbors and rivers; for fortifications; for revolutionary and other pensioners; to refund the fine imposed on General Andrew Jackson at New Orleans; and an act to amend the judiciary act of September 24, 1789. A large number of private acts, and laws respecting the territories, with others of a local character, were passed.

In March, 1843, Mr. Forward resigned, as secretary of the treasury, and John C. Spencer was transferred from the war department to that of the treasury. Caleb Cushing, of Massachusetts, was previously nominated by the president for secretary of the treasury, and rejected by the senate.

Mr. Webster resigned the office of secretary of state, in May, 1843, and Hugh S. Legare, attorney-general, was appointed acting secretary of state, but was soon after taken ill, and died, while on a visit to Boston, on the 20th of June, 1843. Mr. Legare was a gentleman of superior talents, and bore an excellent character with all parties. He had been attached to the democratic party, which he left during the administration of Mr. Van Buren, when that president proposed the sub-treasury plan. He afterward acted with the conservatives, and supported the election of Harrison and Tyler, in 1840.

In July, 1843, President Tyler reorganized his cabinet, as follows:—

Abel P. Upshur, of Virginia, secretary of state; John C. Spencer, of New York, secretary of the treasury; James M. Porter, of Pennsylvania, secretary of war; David Henshaw, of Massachusetts, secretary of the navy; Charles A. Wickliffe, of Kentucky, postmaster-general; John Nelson, of Maryland, attorney-general.

Messrs. Porter, Henshaw, and Nelson, were attached to the democratic party; the other members of the cabinet had been known as whigs or conservatives. At the next session of the senate, the nominations of Mr. Porter, as secretary of war, and of Mr. Henshaw, as secretary of the navy, were rejected. Thereupon the president nominated William Wilkins, of Pennsylvania, for secretary of war, and Thomas W. Gilmer, of Virginia, for secretary of the navy; and they were confirmed by the senate, on the 15th of February, 1844.

In consequence of a melancholy catastrophe which occurred on board the United States steamship-of-war Princeton, on the river Potomac, on the 28th of February 1844, by the explosion of one of the large guns of that ship, the secretary of state, Mr. Upshur, and the secretary of war, Mr. Gilmer, lost their lives. On the reception of the president's message announcing this painful occurrence, resolutions of sympathy, of respect, and for the usual mourning, were adopted in each branch of Congress.

For a short period, Mr. Nelson, attorney-general of the United States, discharged the duties of secretary of state, *ad interim.* Commodore Lewis Warrington officiated as secretary of the navy, until the vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. Gilmer was supplied. The president appointed John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, secretary of state, and John Y. Mason, of Virginia, secretary of the navy; both of which nominations were promptly confirmed by the senate. Mr. Spencer resigned the office of secretary of the treasury, in May, 1844, and George M. Bibb, of Kentucky, was appointed in his place.

Provision having been made by Congress for a mission to China, Caleb Cushing, of Massachusetts, was appointed commissioner to that empire, by the president, in May, 1843; and during a remarkably short period while he was absent on his mission, the commissioner was enabled to negotiate a valuable treaty with the Chinese government, which treaty was promptly ratified by the president and senate.

A treaty of annexation was concluded between the United States and the republic of Texas, at Washington, April 12, 1844, by Mr. Calhoun, secretary of state, on the part of the United States, and Messrs. Van Zandt and Henderson on the part of Texas. On being submitted to the senate, by the president, it was rejected, on the 8th of June, by a vote of ayes 16, noes 35. Of those who voted in the negative, seven were democrats, viz., Messrs. Fairfield, of Maine, Atherton, of New Hampshire, Niles, of Connecticut, Wright, of New York, Allen and Tappan, of Ohio, and Benton, of Missouri. Immediately after the rejection of the treaty, Mr. Benton, in open senate, introduced a bill for the annexation of Texas, consent of Mexico to be first obtained.

The president sent a message to the house of representatives, announcing the rejection of the treaty with Texas, with a view of inducing that body to originate some measure by which to accomplish the object which the treaty contemplated. The house referred the message to their committee on foreign relations, but the subject was not definitely acted on until the next session. In the senate, on the 10th of June, Mr. Benton. in a speech of two hours, characterized the Texas project as a fraud upon the people of the country—a base, wicked, miserable presidential intrigue, originating in the most vicious purpose, and, so far, prosecuted for the most knavish conclusions, regardless alike of the character of the country, its treaty obligations, or its peace. He moved to suspend all previous orders, for the purpose of taking up the bill which he had submitted for the annexation of Texas, when Mexico should sanction the measure. The message of President Tyler, appealing from the decision of the senate, in a case in which the constitution makes that body expressly his advisers and the controllers of his course, Mr. Benton considered to be an insult to that body, which merited impeachment. He alluded to his own far-back prophecies and writings, concerning Texas, and made some allusions to Messrs. Walker and Woodbury, "Texas neophytes," who had been so anxious to make great demonstrations of love for Texas. For himself, he entertained no such anxiety, because his sentiments had always been known. It was not with him a question of "now or never;" but Texas then, now, and always.

An effort was made by the most zealous office-holders under the general government, and other persons interested in the success of Mr. Tyler, to create a popularity for the president out of the question of the annexation of Texas; but the attempt to enlist the feelings of the advocates of that measure in favor of the re-election of Mr. Tyler to the presidency, proved a total failure.

It was evident, however, that the Texas question was becoming one of great importance, and that the annexation of that territory to the United States was daily growing in favor with the people of the southern and western states. The democratic party, therefore, in the southern section of the Union, resolved to present the Texas question to the people as a new issue at the approaching presidential election. As a large proportion of the party in the northern states were opposed to the annexation of Texas, there was a prospect of disunion in the democratic ranks.

The national conventions of both the whig and democratic parties were to be held in May, 1844, for the purpose of nominating candidates for president and vice-president. Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, was the whig candidate named for the presidency, by general consent of that party. Mr

Van Buren appeared to be preferred to any other candidate, by the largest proportion of the democratic party.

In answer to letters and inquiries addressed to them on the Texas question, both Mr. Clay and Mr. Van Buren came out, in the month of April, 1844, with their views on the subject. They were both understood to be unfavorable to the immediate annexation of Texas, particularly without the consent of Mexico. Mr. Clay's letter was generally satisfactory to his political friends; but the course of Mr. Van Buren determined the democrats of the south to prevent his nomination for the presidency, by the convention of that party, if possible, and to seek some other candidate, who was favorable to southern views and feelings on the Texas question.

The whig national convention, for the nomination of president and vice-president, met at Baltimore, on the 1st of May, 1844. Every state in the Union was represented by delegates, and the Hon. Ambrose Spencer, of New York, was chosen president of the convention, assisted by a number of vice-presidents and secretaries. Henry Clay, of Kentucky, was nominated by acclamation, as the candidate to be supported by the whigs, for president of the United States, at the ensuing election; and on the third vote, Theodore Frelinghuysen, formerly of New Jersey, but then a resident of New York, was nominated as the candidate for vice-president. Great unanimity prevailed in the convention after the nominations were announced, and enthusiastic demonstration to support the candidates named.

The democratic national convention of delegates for the nomination of candidates for president and vice-president, met at Baltimore, on the 27th of May, 1844. The states were all represented, except South Carolina. The Hon. Hendrick B. Wright, of Pennsylvania, was chosen president of the convention, assisted by numerous vice-presidents and secretaries. Most of the delegations from the different states had been instructed to vote for Mr. Van Buren for president, but the Texas question had been taken up by the party since those instructions were given, and Mr. Van Buren's letter on the subject had rendered the policy of his nomination doubtful with many who had been anxious for his re-election to the presidency.

On the first ballot by the convention, for a candidate for president, Mr. Van Buren received 146 votes, General Cass 83, Colonel Johnson, of Kentucky, 24, Mr. Calhoun 6, and there were 7 for other persons; thus showing a decided majority in favor of Mr. Van Buren. But the convention having adopted the rule which had governed on former similar occasions, requiring two thirds of the votes for a nomination, no choice was made. Seven subsequent ballots took place, on the last of which Mr. Van Buren received 104 votes, General Cass 114, and 44 for James K. Polk, of Tennessee. The Virginia and New York delegations then each separately retired for consultation, and on their return to the convention it was announced, by Mr. Roane, of Virginia, that the delegation from that state would give their vote for James K. Polk. Mr. Butler, of New York, responded to Mr. Roane, and having the authority of Mr. Van Buren, withdrew his name, and stated that the delegation from New York would cast thirty-five votes in favor of Mr. Polk, the remaining member voting blank. The call of the states being made for a ninth ballot, a unanimous vote from all the delegations was given for James K. Polk, as the democratic candidate for president of the United States. Silas Wright, of New York, was nominated for vice-president, being then in the United States senate, at Washington. The nomination was declined by Mr. Wright, and on the following morning the convention nominated George M. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, for that station.

The candidates nominated, both for president and vice-president, were understood to be in favor of the annexation of Texas to the United States. Resolutions were adopted by the convention, one of which declared, "that our title to the whole of the territory of Oregon is clear and unquestionable; that no portion of the same ought to be ceded to England or any other power; and that the reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas, at the earliest practicable period, are great American measures, which this convention recommends to the cordial support of the democracy of the Union." Another resolution declared, "that the convention hold in the highest estimation and regard their illustrious fellow-citizen, Martin Van Buren, of New York," &c., and that they "tender to him, in his honorable retirement, the assurance of the deeply-seated confidence, affection, and respect, of the American democracy."

The nomination of Messrs. Polk and Dallas had the effect of completely uniting the democratic party throughout the country, and the Texas and Oregon questions had a tendency to infuse renewed vigor among the masses attached to the party, enabling them to enter into the election contest with excited hopes and prospects of success.

At the same time when the democratic convention met at Baltimore, a convention of the friends of President Tyler, composed of delegates from various parts of the Union, principally office-holders and political adventurers, assembled at that city, and placed the name of Mr. Tyler in nomination as a candidate for election to the presidency. The president accepted the nomination, but his case as a candidate being hopeless, he yielded, in August, to the solicitations of the friends of Polk and Dallas, who were desirous to have the aid and patronage of the general government in favor of the democratic candidates, and withdrew his name from the presidential canvass. On that occasion Mr. Tyler published an address in the Madisonian, the official paper at Washington, to his friends throughout the Union, announcing his intention and desire to withdraw from the position in which his friends had placed him. He concludes his address by saying: "I appeal from the vituperation of the present day to the pen of impartial history, in the full confidence that neither my motives nor my acts will bear the interpretation which has, for *sinister purposes*, been placed upon them."

After a most animated and exciting canvass, the presidential election took place, in the fall of 1844, and resulted in the election of the democratic candidates, James K. Polk as president, and George M. Dallas as vice-president, of the United States, over the whig candidates, Clay and Frelinghuysen. The votes of the electoral colleges were, for Polk and Dallas, 170; for Clay and Frelinghuysen, 105. Tho popular vote was, for Polk, 1,335,834; for Clay, 1,297,033; for Birney, the abolition candidate, 64,653; exclusive of South Carolina, which state gave its electoral vote through the legislature, that body choosing the presidential electors. In the states of New York and Michigan, the democratic electoral ticket received a plurality over the whig vote, less than the amount of abolition votes in those states. In addition to the states which voted for Mr. Van Buren in 1840, giving 60 electoral votes; Mr. Polk received the votes of Maine, 9; New York, 36; Pennsylvania, 26; Georgia, 10; Mississippi, 6; Louisiana, 6; Indiana, 12; and Michigan, 5; which states gave their electoral votes to General Harrison, in 1840.

The second session of the twenty-eighth Congress commenced on the 2d of December, 1844, and closed on the expiration of their term, the 3d of March, 1845. The most important and exciting subject of the session was that of the annexation of Texas. Joint resolutions for annexing that republic to the United States, as one of the states of the Union, passed the house of representatives, on the 25th of January, 1845, by a vote of 120 to 98; and on the 1st of March the same passed the senate, by a vote of 27 to 25; and the same day the resolutions were approved by the president.

Among the public acts of interest passed at this session, were the following: To establish a uniform time for holding elections for electors of president and vice-president, in all the states in the Union; to provide for the establishment of the mail between the United States and foreign countries; granting lands to the state of Indiana, to enable the state to extend and complete the Wabash and Erie canal; to reduce the rates of postage, and to limit the use, and correct the abuse, of the franking privilege; allowing drawback upon foreign merchandise exported by the interior to Mexico and the British North American provinces; for the construction and improvement of roads in Wisconsin; making appropriations for fortifications; and an act for the admission of the states of Iowa and Florida into the Union. Florida complied with the terms of the last act, and was, consequently, admitted into the Union; but the people of Iowa rejected the terms, principally on account of the boundary defined by Congress, and, therefore, Iowa remained a territory.

A bill forbidding the president to build revenue-cutters at his own discretion, which had been vetoed by President Tyler, was again passed by the senate, and by the house, by more than a two-third vote (in the latter by 126 to 31), and thus became a law, notwithstanding the veto. A bill making appropriations for certain harbors and rivers, passed both houses, near the close of the session, but was retained by the president, and thus failed to become a law, in consequence of what was called a "pocket veto," which was the last act of Mr. Tyler's administration, as a similar act had been that of President Jackson's, in 1837.

Thus ended the administration of John Tyler; of whom it may be said, that he retired without the regret of either of the two great political parties of the country; as by his course he had lost the confidence of that party by which he was elected, without gaining that of their political opponents. Many important matters, however, were accomplished by this administration, the credit of which was bestowed upon others, instead of the president. Thus the protective tariff act of 1842 was accomplished by a whig Congress, although approved by the executive; and the settlement of the northeastern boundary question, by the treaty with Great Britain, was accredited to the energy and skill of the secretary of state, Mr. Webster; while the annexation of Texas was a measure which was mainly pushed to completion through the ability and exertions of another secretary of state, Mr. Calhoun; and any benefits that were derived from it as forming political capital, were seized upon and used by the democratic party, for the purpose of coming into power, by the election of Polk and Dallas. It would be unjust, however, to deny to Mr. Tyler whatever merit is his due from the circumstance of having used every exertion to carry through the Texas measure during his administration. Nor is it to be denied that the foreign relations of the United States were ably managed during his presidential term, and that he generally surrounded himself with able counsellors in his cabinet.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JAMES KNOX POLK.

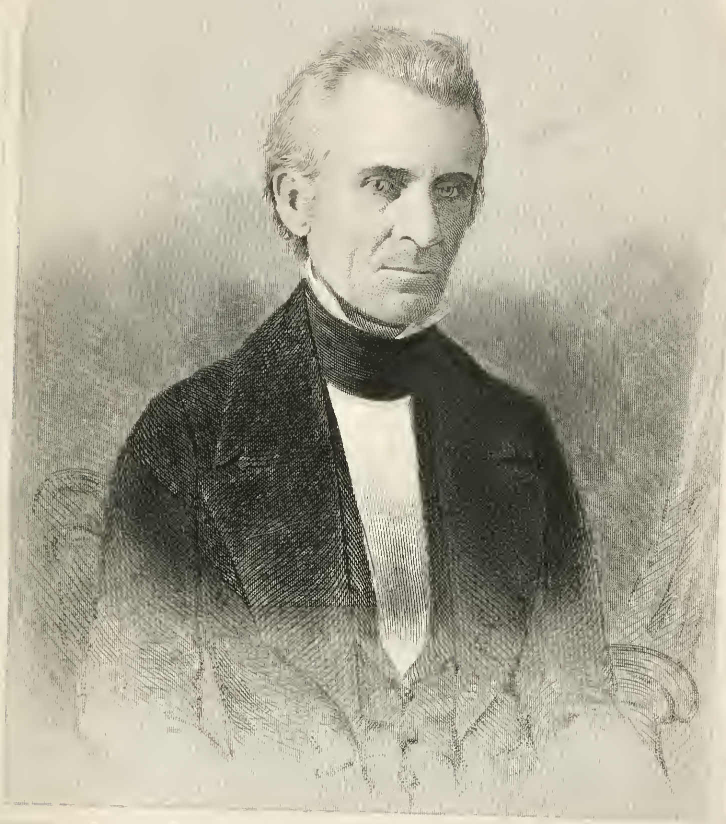
James Knox Polk, the eleventh president of the United States, is the oldest of ten children, and was born on the second of November, 1795, in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina. His ancestors, whose original name, Pollock, has, by obvious transition, assumed its present form, emigrated in the early part of the eighteenth century, from Ireland. The family traces their descent from Robert Polk, who was born and married in Ireland; his wife, Magdalen Tusker, was the heiress of Mowning hill. They had six sons and two daughters; Robert Polk, the progenitor of James Knox Polk, was the fifth son; he married a Miss Gullet, and removed to America. Ezekiel Polk, the grandfather of James K. Polk, was one of his sons.

The Polk family settled in Somerset county, on the eastern shore of Maryland, where some of their descendants still sojourn. Being the only democrats of note in that county, they were called the democratic family. The branch of the family from which the president is descended, removed to the neighborhood of Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, and thence to the western frontier of North Carolina, sometime before the commencement of the revolutionary war. Some of the Polk family were honorably distinguished in that eventful struggle. On the twentieth of May, 1775, consequently more than twelve months anterior to the declaration of independence of the fourth of July, 1776, the assembled inhabitants of Mecklenburg county publicly absolved themselves from their allegiance to the British crown, and issued a formal manifesto of independence, in terms of manly eloquence, similar to some of the expressions in the declaration of the American Congress adopted more than a year afterward. Colonel Thomas Polk, the prime mover in this act of noble daring, and one of the signers of this first declaration of independence, was the great uncle of the president; and the family is also connected with the Alexanders, chairman and secretary of the meeting which adopted the declaration, as well as with Dr. Ephraim Brevard, the author of the declaration itself.

The father of James K. Polk was a farmer of unassuming pretensions, but enterprising character. Thrown upon his own resources in early life, he became the architect of his own fortunes. He was a warm supporter of Mr. Jefferson, and through life a firm and undeviating democrat. In the autumn of 1806 he removed, with his family of ten children, from the homestead in North Carolina, to Tennessee, where he was one of the pioneers of the fertile valley of Duck river, a branch of the Cumberland, then a wilderness, but now the most flourishing and populous portion of the state. In this region the subject of this sketch resided, until his election to the presidency, so that he may be said, literally, to have grown with its growth, and strengthened with its strength. Of course, in the infancy of its settlement, the opportunities for instruction could not be great. Notwithstanding this disadvantage—and the still more formidable one of a painful affection from which, after years of suffering, he was finally relieved by a surgical operation—he acquired the elements of a good English education. Apprehending that his constitution had been too much impaired to permit the confinement of study, his father determined, much, however, against the will of the son, to make him a commercial man; and with this view placed him with a merchant.

He remained a few weeks in a situation adverse to his wishes, and incompatible with his taste. Finally, his earnest appeals succeeded in overcoming the resistance of his father, and in July, 1813, he was placed, first under the care of the Rev. Dr. Henderson, and subsequently at the academy of Murfreesborough, Tennessee, then under the direction of Mr. Samuel P. Black, justly celebrated in that region as a classical teacher. In the autumn of 1815 he entered the university of North Carolina, having, in less than two years and a half, thoroughly prepared himself to commence his collegiate course, being then in the twentieth year of his age.

Mr. Polk's career at the university was distinguished. At each semi-annual examination, he bore away the first honor, and finally graduated in 1818, with the highest distinction of his class, and with the reputation of being the first scholar in both the mathematics and classics. Of the former science he was passionately fond, though equally distinguished as a linguist. His course at college was marked by the same assiduity and studious application which have since distinguished him. His ambition to excel was equalled by his perseverance alone; in proof of which, it is said that he never missed a recitation, nor omitted the punctilious performance of any duty. Habits of close application at college are apt to be despised by those who pride themselves on brilliancy of mind, as if they were incompatible. This is a melancholy mistake. Genius has ever been defined the faculty of appreciation. The latter is, at least, something better, and more available. So carefully has Mr. Polk avoided the ped-



James K. Polk

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antry of classical display, which is the false taste of our day and country, as almost to hide the acquisitions which distinguished his early career. His preference for the useful and substantial, indicated by his youthful passion for the mathematics, has made him select a style of elocution which would perhaps be deemed too plain by the admirers of flashy declamation.*

From the university he returned to Tennessee, with health impaired by application, and, in the beginning of the year 1819, commenced the study of the law (that profession which has furnished nine of the eleven presidents of the United States), in the office of the late Felix Grundy, for many years a representative and senator of Tennessee in Congress ; under whose auspices he was admitted to the bar, at the close of 1820. He commenced his professional career in the county of Maury, with great advantages, derived from the connexion of his family with its early settlement. His warmest friends were the sharers of his father's early privations and difficulties, and the associates of his own youth. But his success was due to his personal qualities still more than to extrinsic advantages. A republican in habits as well as in principles, depending for the maintenance of his dignity upon the esteem of others, and not upon his own assumption, his manners conciliated the general good will. The confidence of his friends was justified by the result. His thorough academical education, his accurate knowledge of the law, his readiness and resources in debate, his unwearied application to business, secured him, at once, full employment, and in less than a year he was already a leading practitioner.

Mr. Polk continued to devote some years exclusively to the prosecution of his profession, with a progressive augmentation of reputation, and the more solid rewards by which it is accompanied. In 1823, he entered upon the stormy career of politics, being chosen to represent his county in the state legislature, by a heavy majority over the former incumbent, but not without formidable opposition. He was for two successive years a member of that body, where his ability in debate, and talent for business, at once gave him reputation. The early personal and political friend of General Jackson, he was one of those who, in the session of 1823–'24, called that distinguished man from his retirement, by electing him to the senate of the United States.

In August, 1825, being then in his thirtieth year, Mr. Polk was chosen to represent his district in Congress, and took his seat in the national councils in December following. He brought with him those fundamental principles to which he has adhered through all the mutations of party. From his early youth he was a democratic republican of the strictest sect. He has ever regarded the constitution of the United States as an instrument of specific and limited powers, and he was found in opposition to

* For a part of this sketch we are indebted to the Democratic Review of May, 1838.

every measure that aimed to consolidate federal power, or to detract from the dignity and legitimate functions of the state governments. He signalized his hostility to the doctrines of those who held to a more liberal construction of the constitution, in all their modes. He always refused his assent to the appropriation of money by the federal government for what he deemed the unconstitutional purpose of constructing works of internal improvement within the states. He took ground early against the constitutionality as well as expediency of a national bank; and in August, 1829, consequently several months before the appearance of General Jackson's first message, announced then his opinions in a published letter to his constituents. He has ever been opposed to a tariff for protection, and was, at all times, the strenuous advocate of a reduction of the revenue to the economical wants of the government. Entertaining these opinions, and entering Congress, as he did, at the first session after the election of John Quincy Adams to the presidency, he promptly took his stand against the doctrines developed in the message of that chief magistrate, and was, during the continuance of his administration, resolutely opposed to its leading measures.

When Mr. Polk entered Congress, he was, with one or two exceptions, the junior member of that body. His first speech was in favor of a proposition to amend the constitution in such manner as to prevent the choice of president of the United States from devolving on Congress in any event. This speech at once attracted public attention by the force of its reasoning, the copiousness of its research, and the spirit of indignation, with reference to the then recent election by Congress, by which it was animated. At the same session the subject of the Panama mission was brought before Congress, and the project was opposed by Mr. Polk, who strenuously protested against the doctrine of the friends of the administration, that as the president and senate are the treaty-making power, the house of representatives can not deliberate upon, nor refuse the appropriations necessary to carry them into effect. The views of Mr. Polk he embodied in a series of resolutions, which reproduced in a tangible shape, the doctrines, on this question, of the republican party of 1798. The first of these resolutions declares, "that it is the constitutional right and duty of the house of representatives, when called upon for appropriations to defray the expenses of foreign missions, to deliberate on the expediency of such missions, and to determine and act thereon, as in their judgment may seem most conducive to the public good."

From this time Mr. Polk's history became inseparably interwoven with that of the house. He was prominently connected with every important question, and upon every one took the boldest democratic ground. He continued to oppose the administration of Mr. Adams until its termination, and during the whole period of General Jackson's terms he was one of its leading supporters, and at times, and on certain questions of paramount importance its chief reliance. In December, 1827, Mr. Polk was placed on the committee of foreign affairs, and sometime after, as chairman of a select committee, he made a report on the surplus revenue, denying the constitutional power of Congress to collect from the people, for distribution, a surplus beyond the wants of the government, and maintaining that the revenue should be reduced to the exigencies of the public service. In 1830, he defended the act of General Jackson in placing his veto on the Maysville road bill, and thus checking the system of internal improvement by the general government, which had been entered upon by Congress.

In December, 1832, Mr. Polk was transferred to the committee of ways and means, and at that session presented the report of the minority of that committee, with regard to certain charges against the United States bank; this minority report presenting conclusions utterly adverse to the institution which had been the subject of inquiry.

The course of Mr. Polk arrayed against him the friends of the bank, and they held a meeting at Nashville to denounce his report. His re-election to Congress was opposed, but, after a violent contest, Mr. Polk was re-elected by a majority of more than three thousand. In September, 1833, President Jackson determined upon the removal of the public deposites from the bank of the United States. This measure, which caused great excitement throughout the country, was carried into effect in October following, and at the subsequent session of Congress it was the leading subject of discussion. In the senate the president was censured for the measure, but he was sustained in the house of representatives. On this occasion Mr. Polk, as chairman of the committee of ways and means, vindicated the president's measure, and by his coolness, promptitude, and skill, carried through the resolutions of the committee relating to the bank and the deposites, and sustaining the administration, after which the cause of the bank was abandoned in Congress.

Toward the close of the memorable session of 1834, Mr. Speaker Stevenson resigned the chair, as well as his seat in the house. The majority of the democratic party preferred Mr. Polk as his successor, but in consequence of a division in its ranks, the opposition united with the democratic friends of John Bell, of Tennessee, and thereby succeeded in electing that gentleman, then a professed friend, but since a decided opponent, of the president and his measures. Mr. Polk's defeat produced no change in his course. He remained faithful to his party, and assiduous in the performance of his arduous duties.

In December, 1835, Mr. Polk was elected speaker of the house of representatives, and again chosen to that station in 1837, at the extra session held in the first year of Mr. Van Buren's administration. The duties of speaker were discharged by him during five sessions, with ability, at a time when party feelings ran high in the house, and in the beginning unusual difficulties were thrown in his way by the animosity of his political opponents. During the first session in which he presided, more appeals were taken from his decision than had occurred in the whole period since the origin of the government; but he was uniformly sustained by the house, including many of his political adversaries. Notwithstanding the violence with which he had been assailed, Congress passed, at the close of the session, in March, 1837, a unanimous vote of thanks to its presiding officer, from whom it separated with the kindest feelings. In the twenty-fifth Congress, over which he presided as speaker at three sessions, commencing in September, 1837, and ending in March, 1839, parties were more nearly balanced (Mr. Polk's majority as speaker being only eight), and the most exciting questions were agitated during the whole period. At the close of the term, Mr. Elmore, of South Carolina, moved "that the thanks of the house be presented to the Hon. James K. Polk, for the able, impartial, and dignified manner in which he has presided over its deliberations, and performed the arduous and important duties of the chair." On this resolution, a long and excited debate arose, which was terminated by the previous question; when the resolution was adopted by 94 in the affirmative to 57 in the negative. But few of the members of the opposition concurred in the vote of approval. The speaker, in adjourning the house, made a reply of more than ordinary length, and showing, on his part, deep feeling. Among other remarks, he said: "When I look back to the period when I first took my seat in this house, and then look around me for those who were at that time my associates here, I find but few, very few, remaining. But five members who were here with me fourteen years ago, continue to be members of this body. My service here has been constant and laborious. I can perhaps say what but few others, if any, can, that I have not failed to attend the daily sittings of this house a single day since I have been a member of it, save on a single occasion, when prevented for a short time by indisposition. In my intercourse with the members of this body, when I occupied a place upon the floor, though occasionally engaged in debates upon interesting public questions, and of an exciting character, it is a source of unmingled gratification to me to recur to the fact, that on no occasion was there the slightest personal or unpleasant collision with any of its members. Maintaining, and at all times expressing, my own opinions firmly, the same right was fully conceded to others. For four years past, the station I have occupied, and a sense of propriety, in the divided and unusually-excited state of public opinion and feeling, which has existed both in this house and the country, have precluded me from participating in your debates. Other duties were assigned me.

"The high office of speaker, to which it has been twice the pleasure of this house to elevate me, has been at all times one of labor and high responsibility. It has been made my duty to decide more questions of parliamentary law and order, many of them of a complex and difficult character, arising often in the midst of high excitement, in the course of our proceedings, than had been decided, it is believed, by all my predecessors, from the foundation of the government. This house has uniformly sustained me, without distinction of the political parties of which it has been composed. I return them my thanks for their constant support in the discharge of the duties I have had to perform.

"But, gentlemen, my acknowledgments are especially due to the majority of this house, for the high and flattering evidence they have given me of their approbation of my conduct as the presiding officer of the house, by the resolution you have been pleased to pass. I regard it as of infinitely more value than if it had been the common, matter-of-course, and customary resolution which, in the courtesy usually prevailing between the presiding officer and the members of any deliberative assembly, is always passed, at the close of their deliberations. I regard this as the highest and most valued testimonial I have ever received from this house, because I know that the circumstances under which it has passed, have made it matter of substance, and not of mere form. I shall bear it in grateful remembrance to the latest hour of my life.

"I trust this high office may in future times be filled, as doubtless it will be, by abler men. It can not, I know, be filled by any one who will devote himself with more zeal and untiring industry to do his whole duty, than I have done."

Few public men have pursued a firmer or more consistent course than Mr. Polk, in adhering to the democratic party, in every vicissitude. In 1835, when all of his colleagues of the Tennessee delegation, in the house of representatives, determined to support Judge White, of that state, as the successor to General Jackson, for the presidency, he incurred the hazard of losing his popularity throughout the state, by avowing his unalterable purpose not to separate from the great body of the democratic party, in the presidential election. He therefore became identified with the friends of Mr. Van Buren, in Tennessee, in 1836, when Judge White received the vote of the state by a popular majority of over nine thousand.

After a service of fourteen years in Congress, Mr. Polk in 1839 declined a re-election from the district which had so long sustained him. He was then taken up by the friends of the administration in Tennessee, as a candidate for governor, to oppose Newton Cannon, who was then governor of the state, and supported by the Whig party for re-election. After an animated canvass, during which Mr. Polk visited the different counties of that extensive state, and addressed the people on the political topics of the day, the election took place in August, 1839, and resulted in a majority for Mr. Polk, of more than 2,500 over Governor Cannon. At the ensuing session of the legislature, Governor Polk was nominated by that body for vice-president of the United States, to be placed on the ticket with Mr. Van Buren. He was afterward nominated for the same office in several other states, but at the election of 1840 he received one electoral vote only for vice-president, which was given by one of the electors in Virginia.

Having served as governor of Tennessee for the constitutional term of two years, Mr. Polk was a candidate for re-election in August, 1841. His prospect was unpromising, as the state in 1840 showed a Whig majority of twelve thousand at the presidential election. The result was the defeat of Mr. Polk, and the election of James C. Jones, the whig candidate, as governor, by a majority of 3,224. Mr. Polk therefore retired from public life, at the expiration of his executive term. Two years after, in 1843, he was again a candidate for the executive chair, in opposition to Governor Jones, but he was the second time defeated, and the whig candidate re-elected, by a majority of 3,833.

From October, 1841, until his elevation to the highest office in the Union, Mr. Polk remained in private life, not, however, an inert spectator of the wild and troubled drama of politics. Happy in the confidence of his immediate neighbors, and his numerous political friends throughout the state, in the affections of a charming family, and in the ardent friendship of Andrew Jackson; he had determined to withdraw himself from the anxieties and labors of public life. But the voice of the democracy of Tennessee forbade the gratification of his wishes; as we have seen, he was repeatedly summoned to stand forward as its representative for governor of the state, and he yielded to the summons, whatever might have been the prospects of success.

Mr. Polk did not conceal his opinions on political subjects, when called upon by his fellow-citizens to express them. Those who differed from him had no difficulty in ascertaining the fact of the difference. A proof of this was found in the circumstance which developed his opinions on the subject of Texas. The citizens of Cincinnati had, early in 1844, expressed their " settled opposition" to the annexation of that republic to the United States, and invited him to announce his concurrence in their judgment. In his reply, he said: " Let Texas be re-annexed, and the authority and laws of the United States be established and maintained within her limits, as also in the Oregon territory, and let the fixed policy of our government be, not to permit Great Britain to plant a colony or hold dominion over any portion of the people or territory of either. These are my opinions; and without deeming it necessary to extend this letter, by assigning the many reasons which influence me in the conclusions to which I come, I regret to be compelled to differ so widely from the views expressed by yourselves, and the meeting of citizens of Cincinnati, whom you represent."

On the 29th of May, 1844, Mr. Polk received the nomination of the democratic national convention, assembled at Baltimore, for president of the United States. To this high office he was elected in the fall of the same year, by the people of the United States, and his majority over Mr. Clay, the Whig candidate, as expressed through the electoral colleges, in December, 1844, was 65. The votes of the presidential electors were—for James K. Polk 170, for Henry Clay 105. George M. Dallas was elected vice-president by the same majority, over Theodore Frelinghuysen. The votes were counted in the house of representatives, on the 10th of February, 1845. The president elect, having repaired to the seat of government, informed the joint committee of Congress, who waited on him, that, "in signifying his acceptance of the office to which he had been chosen by the people, he expressed his deep sense of gratitude to them, for the confidence which they had reposed in him, and requested the committee to convey to their respective houses of Congress, assurances, that, in executing the responsible duties which would devolve upon him, it would be his anxious desire to maintain the honor and promote the welfare of the country."

In person, President Polk is of middle stature, with a full angular brow, and a quick, penetrating eye. The expression of his countenance is grave, but its serious cast is often relieved by a peculiarly pleasant smile, indicative of the amenity of his disposition. The amiable character of his private life, which has ever been upright and pure, secures to him the esteem and friendship of all who have the advantage of his acquaintance. He married a lady of Tennessee, who is a member of the presbyterian church, and well qualified, by her virtues and accomplishments, equally to adorn the circles of private life, or the station to which she has been called. They have no children.

ADMINISTRATION OF POLK.

On the fourth of March, 1845, James K. Polk was inaugurated as president of the United States. A concourse of people seldom congregated in the city of Washington were present to witness the ceremony. The weather proved unfavorable. The morning was lowering; and before the procession reached the capitol it commenced raining, and continued wet during the day, marring the enjoyments, and defeating the expectations of many, also much of the intended exhibition and display.

The ceremony at the capitol was imposing. The occasion was one of those striking displays of our republican system which he must be a stoic indeed that could contemplate with indifference. The flagstaffs of the whigs, as well as those of their triumphant rivals, were decorated, as an acknowledgment that the chief of the nation was there, and must be recognised.

The inaugural procession moved about eleven o'clock, A. M., from the quarters of the president elect, at Coleman's hotel, to the capitol, under the direction of General M'Calla and his aids. In the procession were the military of Washington, officers and soldiers of the revolution, the clergy, president elect and his predecessor, in an open carriage, President Tyler's cabinet, justices of the supreme court, diplomatic corps, members and ex-members of Congress, members of the Baltimore democratic national convention of 1844, officers of the army and navy, &c., democratic associations and clubs of the District of Columbia, and others from a distance, among whom was a detachment of the Empire club of the city of New York, citizens of states and territories, citizens of the District of Columbia, &c.

The senate convened at eleven o'clock, A. M. The oath being administered to Hon. George M. Dallas, vice-president elect, he delivered a brief address to the senators on taking his seat, after which the new senators were qualified. The justices of the supreme court, in gowns, and the diplomatic corps, twenty-nine in number, entered and took their seats; also General Scott, and other officers of the army and navy. About noon, the president elect, Mr. Polk, attended by President Tyler and Senator

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Woodbury, entered the senate-chamber, when a procession was formed to the platform on the east front of the capitol, from which the president delivered his inaugural address. Chief-Justice Taney, then administered to the president the oath of office, after which the president, quitting the capitol, drove rapidly, by an indirect route, to the president's house, where he received, during the afternoon, the congratulations of his fellow-citizens. In the evening he and his lady attended the two inauguration balls which were given in the city.

The senate being in session, the president, on the fifth of March, made the following nominations for members of the cabinet, which were confirmed: James Buchanan, of Pennsylvania, secretary of state; Robert J. Walker, of Mississippi, secretary of the treasury; William L. Marcy, of New York, secretary of war; George Bancroft, of Massachusetts, secretary of the navy; Cave Johnson, of Tennessee, postmaster-general; John Y. Mason, of Virginia, attorney-general.

The tone of the inaugural address of Mr. Polk, on the subjects of the annexation of Texas to the territory of the United States, and of the occupation of the whole of Oregon, both of which questions had been adopted as watchwords by the democratic party, which had been triumphant at the recent presidential election, showed that the new administration entered upon its duties at a critical period, in the foreign relations of the United States. On the one hand, the annexation of Texas threatened to involve the nation in hostilities with Mexico, as the constituted authorities of that republic, had declared that they should view the admission of Texas into the Union of the North American republic of states, as an act of hostility toward Mexico; while, on the other hand, the claims of Great Britain to a large proportion of the Oregon territory, were not to be disregarded, without the danger of a rupture between that powerful kingdom and the United States.

With regard to the Texas question, resolutions for annexing that republic to the United States, had passed both houses of Congress (as we have stated on page 1427), and were approved by President Tyler, on the first of March, 1845, being one of the last acts of his administration. These resolutions of annexation had been objected to by Messrs. Benton and Bagby, senators of the democratic party, on the ground of its being indispensable to the accomplishment of annexation, that a treaty must be made with the government of Texas, as a foreign power, and that the treaty-making power, by the constitution, is vested in the president and senate, and not in Congress. At the suggestion of those two senators, an amendment was added to the resolutions from the house of representatives, giving a discretion to the president to adopt the latter method, of proceeding by treaty, if he thought proper, instead of the method of direct annexation contemplated by the resolutions from the house. It was understood that without that modification, the resolutions which passed the senate by a majority of two votes, would not have received the votes of those two senators, and consequently, the measure of annexation would not have been carried. How far the constitutional objections of senators Benton and Bagby were obviated by the amendment, seems to have depended entirely upon their faith in the president's selecting the course they deemed to be in accordance with the constitution.

It was believed by some of the friends of the president elect, that he would immediately proceed to negotiate a treaty with Texas, to consummate the act of annexation, and which on being submitted to the senate would be approved, and thus the constitutional objections of many would be obviated. But the action of President Tyler, in the short space of time allowed him after the passage of the Texas resolutions before retiring from the presidency, anticipated the necessity of any decision on the part of President Polk, and hurried the annexation of Texas to the United States without the formality of a treaty. On the third of March, the last day of his term of office, President Tyler despatched a messenger to deliver to Mr. Donelson, chargé d'affaires to Texas, the joint resolutions of Congress for the admission of Texas into the Union, instructing the chargé to communicate to the Texan government, information, that he, as president of the United States, had made his election as to the alternative contained in the resolutions of Congress, looking to the admission of Texas into the Union — namely, that he had chosen the alternative of immediate annexation, as proposed by the original resolutions, instead of negotiating by treaty, as proposed by the amendment. The course of Mr. Tyler, in thus forestalling the action of the new president, was much censured by many of the friends of the incoming administration. The leading democratic journal at Washington, the Globe, remarked on this subject, that "to the chief magistrate chosen by the people with an especial eye to this question, *alone*, it is notorious the discretion confided in the act of Congress was intended to apply. It is clear that as Mr. Tyler began his presidential career in virtue of an accident, that he meant to take the benefit of the whole chapter of accidents, to blend himself with results having their origin in the counsels of Generals Jackson and Houston, and which his inauspicious management has so far marred in their progress."

The resolutions of Congress annexing Texas to the United States, and admitting that republic into the Union, were submitted by the president of Texas to a convention of delegates, called for the purpose of forming a state constitution, and were assented to by that body in behalf of the people of Texas, on the fourth of July, 1845, and thus Texas became part of the United States.

The convention of Texas having authorized and requested the president of the United States to occupy and establish posts without delay upon the frontier and exposed positions of that republic, and to introduce such forces as were deemed necessary for the defence of the territory and people of

Texas, an "army of occupation" was despatched from the United States, under the command of General Taylor, and on the twenty-sixth of July, a body of United States troops landed from steam-vessels at Aransas bay, on which day the American flag was first planted in Texas, by authority, upon the south end of St. Joseph's island. This movement, with the measures of annexation agreed upon by the United States and Texas, were looked upon by the Mexican government as acts of hostility toward Mexico, and preparations were made by the republic for an appeal to arms.

In addition to the difficulties arising from the Texas question, there were other grounds of dispute between the United States and Mexico. In the wars between Spain and Mexico, caused by the attempts of the mother-country to resubjugate her colonies in America, as well as in the civil wars which occasionally convulsed the Mexican nation, the authorities of the latter power resorted to the most illegal measures to replenish their coffers. The proximity of the United States, and the extent of their commerce in the gulf, exposed them to the depredations of a government generally controlled by military chieftains, and thus were the pacific relations between the two republics often interrupted. Vessels under the American flag were plundered, and the property of American merchants confiscated. Blockades were attempted to be enforced by one contending party against the other, during the civil wars which distracted the republic of Mexico, and consequently the commerce of other nations was seriously injured by seizures under regulations and enactments which often appeared to have been unjustly and arbitrarily established.

The government of the United States remonstrated against the illegal seizures of the property of their citizens. Promises of redress were postponed or evaded, until at length a treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, was concluded between the two republics, in April, 1831. But this did not terminate the aggressions of Mexico upon American commerce, and further remonstrances on the part of the United States, and delay on the part of Mexico, took place, until a new negotiation was opened in 1839, and a commissioner appointed for the adjustment of claims of American citizens, which commissioners met in 1840. The amount of claims in the aggregate was over six millions of dollars, over two millions of which were admitted, and the remaining four millions were left undecided, when the commission expired in February, 1842.

By another convention, concluded in January, 1843, the sum acknowledged and awarded to the American claimants, was admitted, by the Mexican government, and for the accommodation of the latter, the payment was divided into twenty instalments, three of which, with the interest due on the thirtieth of April, 1839, were paid, but the remaining instalments, commencing with that payable in April, 1844, were still due by Mexico on the breaking out of hostilities. The convention of January, 1843, also made provision for another convention for the settlement of the remaining claims; in accordance with which, a third convention was signed at the city of Mexico, on the twentieth of November, 1843. This convention was ratified by the senate of the United States, with two amendments, which were considered just and reasonable. Although the subject was repeatedly urged upon the consideration of the Mexican government, she did not decide whether she would or would not accede to those amendments.*

On the sixth of March, 1845, General Almonte, the Mexican minister to the United States, protested against the resolutions of Congress, providing for the annexation of Texas, and demanded his passports, which were granted; and on the 2d of April, the American minister in Mexico was refused all intercourse with that government, upon the ground that the government of Mexico could not continue diplomatic relations with the United States, upon the presumption that such relations were reconcilable with the law of annexation. Herrera, the Mexican president, issued a proclamation on the 4th of June, 1845, declaring that the annexation of Texas in nowise destroyed the rights of Mexico, and that she would maintain them by force of arms. Two decrees of the Mexican Congress were affixed to this proclamation, providing for calling out all the armed forces of the nation.

Under these circumstances the diplomatic intercourse between the two republics was interrupted, and this state of things existed from the spring of 1845, until the commencement of actual hostilities in 1846.

The settlement of the northwestern boundary, between the United States and the territories of Great Britain, comprehending the claims of both powers to the Oregon territory, had long been a subject of negotiation. Three several unsuccessful attempts had been made to settle the questions in dispute between the two countries, by negotiation upon the principle of compromise. These negotiations took place at London, in the years 1818, 1824, and 1826; the first two under the administration of Mr. Monroe, and the last under that of Mr. Adams. By the convention of October, 1818, a system of joint occupancy of the Oregon territory, by American and British subjects was agreed upon, and the negotiation of 1826, resulted in the convention of August, 1827, by which it was agreed to continue the joint occupation for an indefinite period, and that it should be competent for either of the contracting parties, after the 20th of October, 1828, on giving due notice of twelve months to the other contracting party, to annul and abrogate the agreement of joint occupation.

Thus the Oregon question stood when President Polk came into power. Although, as he had declared previously to his election, he considered the American title good to the whole of Oregon, and that the British claims could not be maintained to any portion of that territory, he deemed it his duty to renew the propositions of compromise which had been made by his predecessors, to adjust the question on the parallel of forty-nine degrees of north latitude. A proposition was accordingly made to that effect, on the part of the United States, by Mr. Buchanan, the secretary of state, to Mr. Pakenham, the British plenipotentiary at Washington, and rejected by the latter, who after a correspondence of some length, suffered the negotiation on his part to drop, without submitting any other proposition. The president thereupon directed the proposition of compromise which had been made and rejected to be withdrawn, and the title of the United States to the whole of the territory of Oregon asserted.

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* Jenkins's History of the War with Mexico.

Mr. Everett, the American minister at the court of Great Britain having been recalled, Louis M'Lane was, in June, 1845, appointed by President Polk, embassador to that court, to succeed the former gentleman, and immediately embarked for London, where he arrived on the 1st of August, 1845. Mr. M'Lane had served in the same capacity, in 1830, during the administration of General Jackson.

The first session of the twenty-ninth Congress, commenced on the 1st of December, 1845, and continued until the 10th of August, 1846. The administration was sustained by a majority in both houses, the democratic party having been triumphant in a majority of the congressional districts, and succeeded in changing in their favor the political character of the senate. In the house of representatives the strength of parties was exhibited in the choice of speaker. John M. Davis of Indiana, the democratic candidate, was elected, receiving one hundred and twenty votes, against seventy-two, for Samuel F. Vinton, of Ohio (whig), and nineteen for other persons.

The principal recommendations of the president, in his first annual message to Congress were, a revision of the tariff of duties on imports, with a view to the reduction of the rates of duty, and a consequent withdrawal of the amount of protection to domestic industry, afforded by the tariff of 1842; and the establishment of an independent treasury system, similar to that which had been enacted under the administration of Mr. Van Buren, and repealed during that of Tyler. The president also recommended the passage of a resolution giving notice of the termination after one year of the agreement for the joint occupation of Oregon territory. These several measures of the new administration were adopted by Congress. A new tariff of duties, having in view the interests of the public revenue, and only incidentally that of protection, the bill being based on a plan drawn up by the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Walker, was enacted, after a protracted discussion, by a vote of one hundred and fourteen to ninety-four in the house, and by twenty-eight to twenty-seven in the senate On the question of discharging a committee to whom the bill was referred for amendment, the senate was equally divided, when Mr. Dallas, the vice-president, gave the casting vote in the affirmative, and the bill was subsequently passed, as above stated, to take effect on the 1st of December,

1846. A warehouse bill was also passed at this session, authorizing the warehousing in public stores of imported articles subject to duty for a limited period, without payment of duties until wanted for home consumption or exportation. The tariff and warehouse acts gave great dissatisfaction to the manufacturing interests, particularly in Pennsylvania, and other middle states, where the large iron and other establishments, most affected by the reduction of duties and the substitution of advalorem rates of duty instead of specific duties, are situated.

The difficulties with Mexico having assumed a hostile character, and rencontres between the American and Mexican troops on the Rio Grande having taken place, an act was passed by Congress, on the 13th of May, 1846, declaring, that "by the act of the republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that government and the United States," and placing the militia, naval, and military forces of the United States, at the disposal of the president to enable him to prosecute the war to a speedy and successful termination. The whig members in order to secure unanimity, proposed to strike out the preamble of the bill, but the motion was refused by the friends of the administration, and the bill with the preamble passed the house, one hundred and forty-two to fourteen, and the senate by a vote of forty to two. On the same day the president issued his proclamation, under the provisions of the act.

The declaration of war, was of course, followed by enactments for carrying it on with vigor. Whatever the president asked for from Congress was promptly voted, and with uncommon unanimity. The army proper was authorized to be augmented to nearly double its usual force. The navy was placed upon a war establishment and considerably enlarged. A volunteer force of fifty thousand men was authorized. Loans and treasury-notes to the amount of ten or twelve millions were authorized. Appropriations of ten millions in one sum, and in another of twelve millions, and various amounts in other bills, were granted within the space of a few weeks.

The Smithsonian Institution was established by enactment at this session, to be located at Washington, and sustained by funds bequeathed to the United States, by Mr. Smithson an English gentleman, for the purposes of literature, science, and education.

Acts, under which senators and representatives from Texas took their seats in Congress, were passed, also preliminary acts providing for the admission into the Union of the states of Iowa and Wisconsin.

Besides the bills enacted, the two houses passed and sent to the president for his signature, a bill for improving rivers and harbors, and a bill granting payment to American citizens for French spoliations on American commerce, which had been settled by treaty between France and the United States. Both of these bills the president returned with his veto, and they were lost.

A resolution for terminating the joint occupation of Oregon by the United States and Great Britain, passed both houses.

Near the close of the session of this Congress, a bill being before the house, authorizing the president to use the sum of three millions of dollars if he deemed expedient, in negotiating a treaty of peace with Mexico, Mr. Wilmot, a representative from Pennsylvania, friendly to the administration, moved to add thereto a *proviso*, in the words following: "That there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, in any territory on the continent of America, which shall hereafter be acquired by, or annexed to, the United States by virtue of this appropriation, or in any other manner whatsoever, except for crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted: *Provided always*, That any person escaping to such territory, from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed, in any one of the United States, such fugitive may be lawfully reclaimed and conveyed out of said territory to the person claiming his or her labor or service."

This proviso was adopted with little discussion, but not without calling forth much feeling, by the house, nearly all the members from the free states supporting, while those from the slaveholding states opposed it. The bill thus amended was on the last day of the session sent to the senate, and was promptly met by Mr. D. H. Lewis of Alabama, with a motion to strike out the proviso. Mr. Davis of Massachusetts rose in opposition to this motion, and was speaking against it, when word was brought that the house had adjourned — the hour of adjournment, noon, having been struck by the clock in the house, though not yet reached by the senate's clock. The bill therefore failed for the session.

The controversy with Great Britain, respecting the northwestern boundary and the Oregon territory, was settled by a treaty negotiated, June 15, 1846, at Washington, by Mr. Buchanan, on the part of the United States, and Mr. Pakenham, on the part of Great Britain. The basis of this treaty was a settlement of the boundary line on the forty-ninth degree of north latitude. The proposition was made by the British government, through Mr. M'Lane, American minister at London, and was submitted as soon as received by the president to the senate, asking their advice respecting the expediency of accepting the stipulations, and accompanying this application with a declaration that his own opinions on the Oregon question remained unchanged. The advice of the senate was given to the president, to negotiate with the British government, and he therefore caused the *projet* to pass through the usual forms of negotiation, when, after discussion, it was duly ratified by the senate in June, 1846. By this treaty the last remaining subject of controversy between the United States and Great Britain was removed, and the relations of the two countries were thus placed on the most firm and amicable footing.

During the first session of the twenty-ninth Congress, the affairs of the United States with Mexico, assumed a decidedly hostile character, as already stated. In the month of March, 1846, the largest part of the regular army of the United States, having been previously concentrated at Corpus Christi, under the command of Gen. Taylor, for the protection of Texas; that officer was ordered by the war department to move forward to the left bank of the Rio Grande. About the last of March, the army arrived at the latter point, and selected a position for the army opposite to Matamoras, at the same time establishing a dépôt of supplies at Point Isabel, about thirty miles in his rear, and near the coast.

The three Mexican generals commanding the troops on the Rio Grande, Meja, Ampudia, and Arista, declared that the advance of Gen. Taylor and his army was a hostile movement. The American government claimed that the territory of Texas extended to the Rio Grande, while the Mexicans insisted that the river Nueces was the true boundary of Texas. On the 24th of April, the Mexican general Arista informed General Taylor that "he considered hostilities commenced and should prosecute them." On the same day a detachment of American dragoons sent on the left bank of the river to observe the movement of the Mexican forces, became engaged with a large body of these troops, and after a short affair, in which some sixteen were killed and wounded, the American detachment was compelled to surrender.

After this occurrence, General Taylor, availing himself of the authority vested in him by the president and the war department, called on the governors of Texas and Louisiana, for four regiments of volunteers from each state, to be sent forward with the least practicable delay. On the 8th of May, General Taylor being on his return from Point Isabel to the Rio Grande, with his army, encountered the Mexicans in considerable force at Palo Alto, where an action ensued, and the Mexicans were defeated. On the next day the hostile forces again met seven miles in advance, at Resaca de la Palma, when the Americans were again victorious, and the Mexicans retreated with great loss, across the Rio Grande. During Gen. Taylor's absence, Fort Brown opposite Matamoras, was bombarded by the Mexican batteries from the 4th to the 9th of May.

As soon as it became known at Washington, that hostilities had commenced, by the affair of the 24th of April, Congress recognised the existence of a state of war between the United States and the republic of Mexico, and on the 13th of May authorized the president to accept the services of volunteers, not to exceed fifty thousand. Under this act, requisitions were immediately made upon the governors of eleven of the southern and western states for a volunteer force, amounting to twenty-three thousand effective men. This call was promptly responded to, much the larger portion of the force being designed to co-operate with the regular army under General Taylor on the Rio Grande. After establishing his base of operations on that river for several hundred miles, Gen. Taylor, who, on the 18th of May, had taken military possession of the city of

Matamoras, moved into the enemy's country, in the direction of Monterey, in the department of New Leon. Another portion of the volunteers was concentrated under General Wool, at San Antonio de Bexar, for a movement upon Chihuahua ; and the volunteers from the state of Missouri assembled at Fort Leavenworth, to compose, with a few hundred regular troops, an expedition to Santa Fe, in New Mexico, under Gen. Kearney.

The army under General Taylor arrived before Monterey, on the 19th of September, 1846, and commenced the attack on that strongly-fortified city, on the 21st, the battle continuing through that and the two successive days. The Americans attacked the enemy in his fortified position, captured his batteries, and various fortresses, when terms of capitulation, were solicited by the Mexican general, and liberal terms were granted by the American commander.

The advanced column under General Wool, destined for Chihuahua, commenced its march from San Antonio de Bexar, on the 29th of September, and soon after penetrated the department of Coahuila, to Monclova, the ancient capital of the province, which town the American army entered on the 29th of October, being favorably received by the inhabitants. Gen. Wool with his army afterward formed a junction with the forces under General Taylor at Saltillo.

General Kearney, with the force under his command, moved from Fort Leavenworth upon Santa Fe, where he arrived, after a march of eight hundred and seventy-three miles, on the 18th of August, 1846, and took military possession of New Mexico without resistance. Agreeably to his instructions, General Kearney then established a temporary civil government in New Mexico, and departed with a portion of his forces for California. On his route thither he met an express sent by Commodore Stockton, and Captain (afterward Lieutenant-Colonel) Fremont, who reported that they were already in possession of the Californias. On receiving this intelligence, General Kearney sent back part of his troops, and with about one hundred dragoons continued his march for California, where he arrived in the month of December, 1847. After various actions and skirmishes with the enemy, the American forces remained in quiet possession of the Californias. General Kearney continued in command until the 31st of May, 1847, when he returned home, leaving Colonel Mason as the commanding officer to succeed him in the military government of California.

Various other successes attended the American arms by land and water, during the first year of the war with Mexico. In December, 1846, the secretary of war, reported that, by the operations of the land and naval forces, the United States were then in military possession of the department of Tamaulipas, of the right bank of the Rio Grande, for several hundred miles from its mouth ; and, of the department of New Leon, Coahuila and Chihuahua were then, in effect, wrested from the control of Mexico ; all Mexican authority had been displaced in New Mexico and the Californias, and those large provinces were in quiet possession of the Americans. "Such," says the secretary, "are the achievements of our arms within the short period of seven months from the commencement of a war suddenly forced upon us, when our force was less than three thousand effective men, with a hostile army of double its numerical strength prepared to assail it, and exulting in the confident hope of a decisive victory."

On the 22d of February, 1847, was fought the important battle of Buena Vista, near Saltillo, the capital of Coahuila, by the American troops under Gen. Taylor, and the Mexican army under Gen. Santa Anna. The latter consisted of twenty thousand men, while the American forces were less than one fourth of that number, not five hundred of whom were regulars. The action continued two days, after which the Americans were left in possession of the field, and the Mexicans retreated to San Luis Potosi. The loss on both sides was severe, that of the Mexicans over fifteen hundred, and of the Americans about seven hundred and fifty in killed and wounded.

The second session of the twenty-ninth Congress, commenced on the 7th of December, 1846, and continued until the expiration of its term on the 3d of March, 1847. But few acts of general interest were passed, and much of the time of the session was taken up in discussing the topics of the president's message, particularly the war with Mexico, and its probable effect upon the general interests of the country. The bill authorizing the president to employ three millions of dollars, if deemed expedient, in negotiations for a peace with Mexico, was again revived, and the proviso offered by Mr. Wilmot at the last session, prohibiting slavery in acquired territory, was again proposed as an amendment, and at first the proviso passed the house, but being stricken out in the senate and returned to the house, the latter body concurred with the senate, and thus the three million-bill became a law, without the Wilmot proviso, as the amendment was called. An additional army bill, and another authorizing the appointment of additional army officers, were passed; also an act to provide for the building of four mail-steamships, and the employment of twelve mail-steamships. A bill making appropriations for the improvement of harbors and rivers passed both houses, but failed of obtaining the president's signature, being retained by the executive at the close of the session.

During the month of February, 1847, an American land and naval force was concentrated on the gulf of Mexico; the military being under the command of Major-General Scott, and the naval forces under Commodore Connor, who was afterward relieved by Commodore Perry. On the 9th of March, the troops were debarked at Vera Cruz, and on the following day a rapid fire of shot and shells was opened from the city and castle, upon the position occupied by the American army. The landing of the mortars and guns for the American batteries was delayed for several days; consequently the arrangements for a bombardment were not completed until the 22d of March, when General Scott summoned the city to surrender, which demand was refused by the Mexican governor, Morales. Orders were then given to fire upon the city, and a continued fire from the American batteries was kept up with terrible effect until the 26th of March, when the batteries ceased playing, and articles of capitulation were signed on the following day. The surrender of the city took place on the morning of the 29th, when the Mexican soldiers marched out to a plain, one mile outside of the town, where the Americans were drawn up to receive them. The Mexicans laid down their arms and departed for the interior

A succession of battles, with uniform success, was fought by the army under General Scott, on their march from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico, which capital they entered on the 14th of September, 1847.

Changes having taken place in the Mexican government, and a party favorable to peace with the United States placed in power, the leaders of which party could not fail to perceive the hopelessness of a farther contest with their more powerful neighbor, commissioners were appointed by the Mexican government to treat with Mr. Trist, who had been authorized by the president of the United States to negotiate a treaty. Notwithstanding the powers delegated to Mr. Trist had been revoked, negotiations were opened and continued until the 2d of February, 1848, when a treaty of peace was signed by the Mexican commissioners and Mr. Trist, at the city of Guadalupe Hidalgo. By this treaty, the Rio Grande was acknowledged as one of the boundaries between the United States and Mexico, thus confirming the claims of the United States to Texas, and the territory between the river Nueces and the Rio Grande. New Mexico and Upper California were also ceded to the United States, in consideration of which the United States agreed to pay to Mexico, the sum of fifteen millions of dollars; and to assume the claims due her citizens, to an amount not exceeding three and one fourth millions of dollars—Mexico being entirely released and discharged from the payment of such claims. This treaty was duly ratified by the Mexican Congress, and by the senate of the United States, and on the 4th of July, 1848, the president of the United States issued his proclamation, directing the same to be observed by the authorities and people of the Union.

The elections for members of the thirtieth Congress, held in 1846 and 1847, showed that the administration was not able to sustain the popularity by which it came into power. While the war with Mexico was unpopular in some of the states, in others the repeal of the protective tariff of 1842, and the passage by a democratic Congress of the tariff act of 1846, which was avowedly based on a revenue principle, instead of that of protection, were measures which were regarded with disfavor by a large portion of the people by whose votes the democratic triumph at the presidential election of 1844 was effected. Consequently the congressional elections in Pennsylvania, New York, and some other states, showed a large gain in favor of the whig party, and in opposition to the administration. In the state of New York, the whigs were aided by local dissensions in the democratic party, which became divided into two sections called eventually "hunkers" or conservatives, and "burnburners" or radicals. At the election of 1846, Silas Wright belonging to the barnburner faction, being nominated for re-election as governor, was defeated, and the whig candidate, John Young, elected by a large majority, many of the hunkers withholding their votes from Mr. Wright, who in 1844, had been elected governor by a majority exceeding ten thousand. At the election of 1846, a large majority of the members of Congress, elected from the state of New York, were of the whig party.

The result of the elections for members of Congress throughout the country, being known before the meeting of the thirtieth Congress, it was well ascertained that a majority of the house of representatives would be found opposed to the administration, while a majority of the senate continued democratic in its character.

The first session of the thirtieth Congress commenced on the 6th of December, 1847, and continued until the 14th of August, 1848. Robert C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts (whig), was elected speaker of the house of representatives on the third ballot, receiving one hundred and ten votes; Linn Boyd of Kentucky (democrat), sixty-four — other democratic candidates forty-one, and there were three scattering whig votes. A whig clerk and serjeant-at-arms were also elected.

But few important acts of a general character were passed at this session. A loan of sixteen millions of dollars was authorized, and an act for the purchase of the papers of Mr. Madison, fourth president of the United States, was passed. A bill for the organization of the territory of Oregon was also passed.

A national convention of the democratic party, for the nomination of president and vice-president, was held at Baltimore, in May, 1848. The two sections of the democratic party in New York were represented at the convention, and each delegation claimed admission. It was finally decided to admit both delegations, but each of them declined to take their seats, and consequently, New York was not represented in the convention. On the fourth ballot the convention nominated General Lewis Cass for president, and General William O. Butler of Kentucky, was afterward nominated for vice-president.

The national convention of the whig party met at Philadelphia, on the 1st of June, 1848. Much difference of opinion prevailed in the selection of a candidate for president, the principal candidates named, being Zachary Taylor of Louisiana, Henry Clay of Kentucky, Winfield Scott of New Jersey, and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts. On the third ballot

General Taylor was nominated, receiving one hundred and seventy-one votes, General Scott sixty-two, Henry Clay thirty-two, and Daniel Webster thirteen. In point of fact, this nomination had been settled from the beginning. Many delegates who had voted for other candidates at first, were known to be really in favor of General Taylor, believing him the most available candidate, in consequence of his successful campaigns in Mexico, and only voting for other candidates in deference to the opinions of their constituents. Millard Fillmore of New York was on the second ballot, nominated for vice-president by a decided majority.

The agitation of the Wilmot-proviso question, by which it was proposed to restrict or prohibit slavery, in the territory acquired by the United States from Mexico, caused the formation of a third party, called "the free-soil party," merging in its ranks most of those who had been organized as abolitionists, and drawing additional strength from both the whig and democratic parties in the northern states. A convention of the free-soil party was held at Buffalo, in the state of New York, on the 8th of August, 1848, and nominated Martin Van Buren of New York, for president, and Charles Francis Adams of Massachusetts, for vice-president.

On the 7th of November, 1848, the presidential election took place throughout the Union, and resulted in the choice of the whig candidates, General Taylor for president, and Millard Fillmore for vice-president, each of whom received one hundred and sixty-three electoral votes. The democratic candidates, General Cass and General Butler, each received one hundred and twenty-seven electoral votes. The free-soil candidates, Van Buren and Adams, did not receive any of the electoral votes, as they were all given by states, but their aggregate popular vote exceeded two hundred and ninety thousand.

The second session of the thirtieth Congress commenced on the 4th of December, 1848, and continued until the expiration of its term on the 4th of March, 1849.

The principal subject of public interest agitated at this session, was that of the organization of governments, for the newly-acquired territories by cession from Mexico, namely, New Mexico, and California; but in consequence of disagreement between the senate and house of representatives, with regard to the prohibition of slavery in those territories, all attempts made to pass laws for their organization as territorial governments, or otherwise, were unsuccessful. A majority of the house of representatives were in favor of the "Wilmot-proviso" so called, by which slavery would be prohibited in the new territories, while a majority of the senate were opposed to such proviso or restriction.

Early in the session, Mr. Douglass, of Illinois, introduced in the senate a bill for the admission of California, as a state, into the Union, without the preliminary measure of a territorial government, which had been the uniform precedent established by Congress, except in the case of the admission of Texas. Mr. Douglass gave as his reasons, for introducing the bill, that the discovery of vast mineral wealth in California, and the establishment of facilities for communication therewith, had invited so great a tide of emigration thither, as to give reason to believe that it will soon possess a population far exceeding that requisite for her admission into this confederacy as a state; and that he despaired of any territorial bill being passed at this session of Congress; three different bills presented for that purpose, having already been rejected. His bill provided for the erection of all the territory acquired from Mexico, into one state, by the name of the state of California, Congress reserving the right, at any time, to form new states out of any portion of said territory, lying east of the Sierra Nevada mountains; the state to be divided into two judicial districts.

The above bill was referred to the judiciary committee, which on the 9th of January, made an unfavorable report therein, and recommended the establishment of a territorial government, for each of the two territories of New Mexico and California. In the opinion of a majority of the committee, the power conferred by the constitution on Congress is to admit new states — not to create them.

The subject being referred to a select committee, Mr. Douglass, the chairman thereof, on the 29th January, reported a new bill, providing for the formation of two new states from the territories in question, and leaving the question of slavery to the decision of the people thereof. The bill having been laid aside for the day, on the 2d of February, Mr. Douglass moved that it be again taken up; which motion was negatived by a very decided vote of the senate.

On the 20th of February, Mr. Walker of Wisconsin, submitted in the senate, an amendment to the civil and diplomatic appropriation bill, providing for the extension of the revenue laws of the United States, over California and New Mexico; also to extend the constitution of the United States, and all general laws which are applicable, over the same; likewise that the president appoint the officers, and make the necessary regulations to carry these provisions into effect — the object being to preserve order and administer justice in these territories.

After an able and interesting debate, which was continued for several days, the senate adopted Mr. Walker's amendment by a small majority, but in the house of representatives the bill was further amended by attaching thereto the Wilmot-proviso, prohibiting slavery in the new territories, which the senate refused to accede to, and the debates in the two houses on this subject continued until the very last hour of the session; indeed so as to jeopard the passage of the civil and diplomatic appropriation bill altogether; when finally at five o'clock on Sunday morning, 4th March, the senate, by a vote of thirty-eight to seven, disagreed to the California amendment of the house and receded from their own amendment, thus clearing the appropriation bill of obstructions and passing it — of course sweeping out of the bill, everything relating to a temporary government for California and New Mexico. A bill which had previously passed the house of representatives, extending the revenue laws of the United States to California, was then taken up and passed by the senate.

Mr. Benton, on the 13th December, presented in the senate, a petition from citizens of New Mexico, praying for the organization of a territorial government, protesting against the dismemberment of their territory in favor of Texas, and containing the following clause on the subject of slavery :—

" We do not desire to have domestic slavery within our borders, and until the time shall arrive for our admission into the Union as a state, we desire to be protected by Congress against its introduction among us."

After considerable debate, this petition was ordered to be printed, and referred to the appropriate committee.

Various propositions were introduced at this session to grant the aid of the national government to railroad communications, to be constructed between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, but no definite action was had on either of these plans. A bill was reported in the senate, by Mr. Benton, from the committee on military affairs, authorizing and directing the secretary of the navy to enter into a contract, for a period not exceeding twenty years, with William H. Aspinwall, John L. Stephens, and Henry Chauncey, of New York, for the transportation, by steam, of the mails, naval and army supplies, &c., over a railroad to be constructed across the isthmus of Panama, from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean ; at a sum not exceeding three fourths of the amount now stipulated by law to be paid for the transportation of the mails alone from New York to Liverpool. This bill, although pressed and debated until the last days of the session, failed to receive the support of a majority of the senate.

Mr. Benton also introduced in the senate a bill, which was not acted upon, providing for the location and construction of a central national railroad from the Pacific ocean at San Francisco, to the Mississippi river at St. Louis ; with a branch to the tidewater of Columbia river — appropriating therefor, seventy-five per cent. of the proceeds of sales of the public lands in Oregon and California, and fifty per cent. of the amount of sales of all other public lands.

A convention of southern members of Congress, comprising a large portion of the members of both houses from the slaveholding states, which was held during this session, attracted considerable of the public attention. The motive for calling this convention arose mainly from the previous proceedings in the house of representatives at the present session, relating in part to the subject of slavery, and the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, and in part to the question of the prohibition of slavery in the recently-acquired territories of California and New Mexico.

The first meeting was held in the senate chamber, on the 23d Decemberber, 1848, at which were present sixty-eight members of Congress. Ex-Governor Metcalfe, senator from Kentucky, presided. Mr. Bayly, a member of the house, from Virginia, offered a series of resolutions, embracing essentially the principles of the Virginia resolutions of 1798. These resolutions of Mr. Bayly were referred to a committee of one member from each of the slaveholding states, which committee appointed a sub-committee of five, of whom Mr. Calhoun, of South Carolina, was chairman, to consider and report upon the subjects referred to them.

On the 15th of January, the convention again met, between eighty and ninety members attending; and Mr. Calhoun, from the committee of fifteen, reported "an address of the southern delegates to their constituents," — which paper, after giving a review of the constitutional provisions in relation to slavery, and the rights of the slaveholding states under that instrument, set forth the alleged infractions of these provisions by the northern or free states, and advised the south to be united among themselves in the present crisis, and to maintain an immovable attitude of readiness, if necessary, to defend their rights.

The address having been recommitted to the committee, the convention again met on the 22d of January, when Mr. Berrien, of Georgia, submitted an "address to the people of the United States," as a substitute for that of Mr. Calhoun; which substitute the convention, by a vote of twenty-seven to thirty-four, refused to adopt. Mr. Calhoun's address was then adopted by a vote of forty-two yeas, to seventeen nays, and after being signed by forty-eight members, thirty thousand copies of it were published for distribution. Of the signers, two were whigs, and forty-six democrats.

The principal acts of public importance passed at this session were as follows: to establish the home department, and to provide for an assistant secretary of the treasury, and a commissioner of the customs; to extend the revenue laws of the United States over the territory and waters of Upper California, and to create a collection district therein; to establish the territorial government of Minesota; to make arrangements for taking the seventh census; to authorize the coinage of twenty and one dollar gold pieces; requiring all moneys receivable from customs and from all other sources to be paid immediately into the treasury, without abatement or deduction; to cause the northern boundary line of the state of Iowa to be run and marked; to carry into effect certain stipulations of the treaty between the United States and Mexico; and a resolution authorizing the secretary of war to furnish arms and ammunition to emigrants to Oregon, California, and New Mexico.

A convention or treaty between the governments of the United States and Great Britain, "for the improvement of the communications by post between their respective territories," was signed in London on the 15th of December, 1848, by Lord Palmerston, on the part of the British government, and Mr. Bancroft, on the part of the United States. This was confirmed by the United States senate on the 5th of January, 1849.

In 1846, Mr. M'Lane, minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain, having returned to the United States, George Bancroft was appointed in his place, and consequently resigned as secretary of the navy. To the latter office John Y. Mason was transferred from that of attorney-general, and Nathan Clifford, of Maine, succeeded Mr. Mason. In 1848, Mr. Clifford was appointed minister to Mexico, and was succeeded in the office of attorney-general by Isaac Toucey, of Connecticut.

The administration of Mr. Polk, which terminated on the 4th of March, 1849, was marked by measures and events of the most decided and important character on the interests of the country; among its most important features, was the war with Mexico, began, as we have seen, under circumstances which rendered it unpopular with a considerable portion of the people of the United States, but, in consequence of the unchecked triumphs of the American arms, and the unsurpassed valor and skill of the military and naval forces of the United States employed in Mexico, eventually became popular with the people, and was carried on and brought to a successful and honorable conclusion by the same administration which had commenced it. The advantages gained by this war, as claimed by the friends of the administration, were, the acquisition of the large and important territories of New Mexico and California, by which the area of the United States territory was greatly extended, and the boundary with Mexico permanently settled — the newly-acquired countries being of great value on account of their mineral wealth, and possessing important harbors on the Pacific ocean; also the elevation of the reputation of the people of the United States; and the Mexicans being taught by experience, their inferiority and inability to contend with their northern neighbors, will avoid causes of war on their own part, while their cession of territory to the United States will hasten the peopling and improvement of those portions of the continent of North America, which, under the dominion of the Spanish race, have hitherto lain waste and unoccupied. Those who disapproved of the war contend that a collision of arms might have been avoided by proper measures on the part of the administration of Mr. Polk, and that the advantages gained by the conquests of our army are more than counterbalanced by the sacrifice of more than twenty-five thousand lives of citizens of the United States, lost during the war, by battles, sickness, and other casualties, and at a cost of over one hundred millions of dollars.

The other prominent measures of Mr. Polk's administration were, the settlement of the Oregon boundary question with Great Britain; the establishment of an independent treasury system, by which the revenues of the nation are collected in gold and silver, or treasury-notes, without the aid of banks; and a revision of the tariff, by which the establishment of an advalorem system of duties on imports, accompanied with a warehouse system, has been effected; on the policy of which financial measures the American people have been, and still continue to be, divided in opinion.

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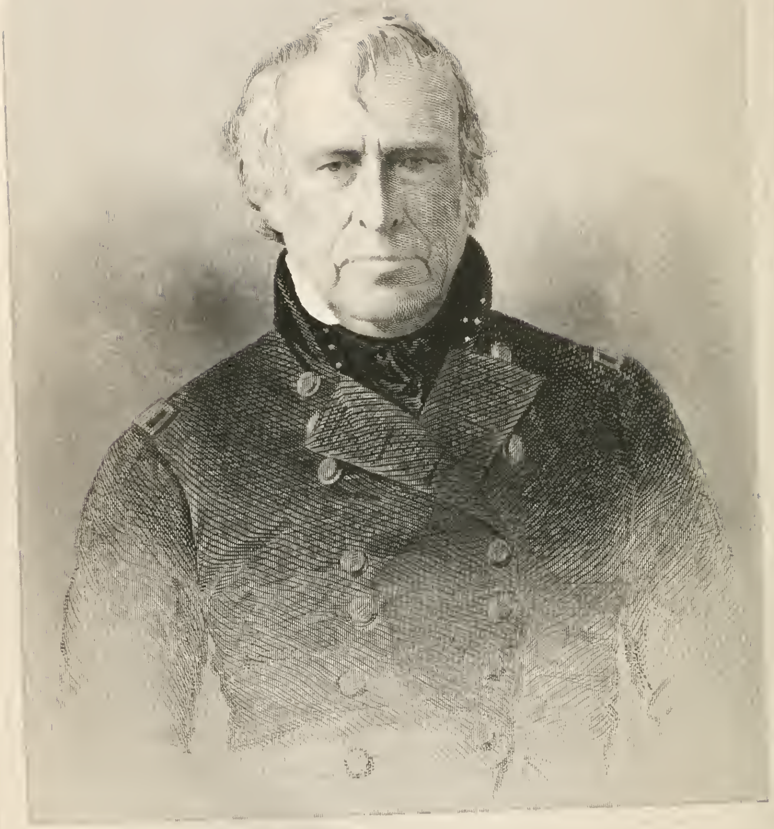

Z Taylor

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

ZACHARY TAYLOR.

VIRGINIA, the "Ancient Dominion" of the British American colonies, has obtained also the name of the "Mother of Presidents," among the states; it being the native state of no less than seven of the presidents of the United States, including ZACHARY TAYLOR, the twelfth on the list of those who have filled that high station. It is worthy of remark, that three of these Virginians have been elected without the aid of the electoral votes of their native state.

The family of the Taylors of Virginia, to which the twelfth president belongs, is honorably distinguished in the annals of the colony and the state. Its ancestors of the same name emigrated from England, with other friends of liberty, and settled in the southeastern part of the colony of Virginia in the year 1692. Among the different branches and connexions of the family are the Madisons, Lees, Barbours, Pendletons, Conways, Taliaferos, Hunts, Gaineses, and others, whose public services and patriotism, during more than a century, are commemorated in colonial and national history.

Richard Taylor, the father of General Zachary Taylor, was born in Virginia, on the 22d of March, 1744. He received a plain but solid education, and in boyhood evinced the bold and adventurous spirit which afterward led him to seek a home in the western wilderness. When still a youth, he made a journey to Kentucky, and thence to the banks of the Mississippi, surveying the country as far as Natchez, and returning on foot, without guide or companion, through pathless woods, inhabited only by savages and wild beasts, to his father's house in Virginia.*

At the age of thirty-five, on the 20th of August, 1779, Richard Taylor married Sarah Strother, a young lady of highly respectable connexions, then in her twentieth year. At this time he held a colonel's commission in the Virginia line, and served with zeal and valor throughout the revolutionary war. He was engaged in several of the most important battles of that war, particularly in the brilliant achievement of Trenton, where he rendered distinguished and valuable aid to General Washington.

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* For part of the facts mentioned in this sketch, we are indebted to Fry's Life of General Taylor; also to Montgomery's memoir of the same.

Five sons and three daughters were the offspring of the marriage of Colonel Richard Taylor—the first child born in 1781. His third son, ZACHARY TAYLOR, the subject of this memoir, was born in Orange county, Virginia, on the 24th of November, 1784. In the following summer his father fulfilled his long-cherished intention of emigrating to Kentucky, only ten years after the first habitation of a white man had been erected in the vast region between the western boundary of Virginia and the Mississippi. In the emigration of Colonel Richard Taylor to this country, he had been preceded by his brother Hancock Taylor, a brave and intelligent man, who lost his life by the Indians while engaged in surveying lands in the Ohio valley. He is said to have selected for his farm the site of the present city of Louisville.

The early years of Zachary Taylor were passed under the guidance of such men, and under such circumstances for the development of a bold spirit and active intellect. His father had settled in Jefferson county, near Louisville, where he acquired a large estate by his industry and thrift, and honorable consideration by his intelligence, bravery, and patriotism. As Louisville rose into importance, his own fortune and local distinction increased. He received from President Washington a commission as collector of that port, New Orleans being then a Spanish possession. Richard Taylor was also one of the framers of the constitution of Kentucky; represented Jefferson county for many years in both branches of the legislature, and was a member of the electoral colleges which voted for Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Clay. Among the politicians of Kentucky he is remembered as one of the few men of the "Old Court party" who could be elected from Jefferson county during the excitement of the old and new court question. He died on his plantation, near Louisville, leaving to survive him three sons and three daughters, of whom one son and two daughters have since died. His two surviving sons, Zachary and Joseph, have both chosen a military profession, as did their brother Hancock, who died in 1808.

One of the chief cares of Colonel Taylor was the education of his children; but during the first ten or fifteen years of his residence in Kentucky, the sparseness of the population, and the exposure of the inhabitants to Indian hostilities, made the accomplishment of his purpose very difficult. A school for the rudiments of English merely was established in his neighborhood by Elisha Ayres, a native of Connecticut, who afterward returned to that state, and now resides, at the advanced age of fourscore years, at Preston, near Norwich. To Mr. Ayres, as his teacher, was Zachary Taylor sent in his early years, to receive such instruction as was practicable under the circumstances, while constant care and watchfulness were necessary on the part of his father and other guardians of his youth, for protection against savage foes.

After the Indians were subdued by the decisive victory of General Wayne, in 1794, a general peace was concluded with them, in the following year, and from that period the prosperity of Kentucky advanced rapidly with the increase of population. Zachary Taylor was reared by his father to his own profession, that of a farmer; and, until he attained the age of twenty-one, was practically engaged in that laborious occupation, laying the foundation of the robust health, hardy habits, and persevering industry, which have been the test of various climates, rude fare, and severe duty, during a military life of more than forty years. The military service very early engaged his affections and excited his ambition. When Aaron Burr's movements in the west began to arouse suspicion, the patriotic young men of Kentucky formed volunteer companies to oppose his designs by arms, if occasion should demand such a result. The brothers Taylor were enrolled in a troop raised for this purpose. Their services were not required by the events, and after the alarm had subsided, Zachary returned to his farm.

On the death of his brother, Lieutenant Hancock Taylor, who held a commission in the United States army, an opportunity was afforded Zachary of obtaining the vacancy. Through the influence of his relative, James Madison, then secretary of state, and of his uncle, Major Edmund Taylor, he received from President Jefferson, on the 3d of May, 1808, his commission as first lieutenant in the seventh regiment of United States infantry. At this time, when he was in the twenty-fourth year of his age, he was in the enjoyment of a competency from his occupation as a farmer. But the activity of his mind, and his taste for a military profession, led him to prefer the care and privations of a soldier's life to the quiet and comforts of a landed proprietor at home. His first experience in his new vocation had nearly proved fatal. He was ordered to report himself to General Wilkinson, in New Orleans; and being seized there with the yellow fever, was obliged to return home for the recovery of his health. He appears to have employed his time sedulously in the study of his profession, as we find him, three years from this time, fulfilling with honor a dangerous and important post.

In 1810, Lieutenant Taylor was married to Miss Margaret Smith, a lady of Maryland, of a highly respectable family in that state. She was sister of the late Major R. S. Smith, of the marine corps.

The Indian tribes on the northwestern frontier of the United States having been excited to feelings of hostilities against the Americans, as was supposed and believed through the agency of British emissaries sent among them, and a general league of the tribes being on the point of formation, by the influence of the noted chief Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet, the American government took early steps to counteract their operations. General Harrison, then governor of the northwestern territory, was ordered to march a competent force into the Indian country.

After the declaration of war, in 1812, Taylor was placed in command of Fort Harrison, a block-house and stockade, which had been erected by order of General Harrison, on the Wabash river, about fifty miles above Vincennes. Congress declared war against Great Britain on the 19th of June, 1812, and at no previous period was the spirit of those Indians who were allies of England, and led on by Tecumseh and the Prophet, so fully aroused to the determination of exterminating the Americans on the northwestern frontier as at this time. Their first object of attack was Fort Harrison, and three months after war with England had been formally declared, they were banded for the purpose of this and other acts of hostility. Captain Taylor had some intimations of their intentions, which were confirmed on the 3d of September, by the report of guns in the vicinity of the fort. On the following day it was discovered that two men had been murdered and scalped by the Indians. Captain Taylor, therefore, made every effort in his power for defence. The whole force under his command was about fifty men, of whom nearly two thirds were invalids, and he himself was just recovering from a fever. The Indians were aware of his weakness, but preferred the exercise of their native cunning to the hazard of an open attack. A deputation of the Prophet's party came to the fort with a white flag, and affecting peaceable intentions. Captain Taylor was not deceived by this stratagem, and he made preparations for an assault from the enemy. At night a watch was set, and the remaining few retired to rest. An hour before midnight the report of a musket was heard, and Taylor, springing from his brief sleep, found his savage foes were making an attack upon the fort. On their approach, the sentinels had retreated within, and it was discovered that the lower building was already fired by the Indians, rendering the situation of the garrison one of extreme peril. The young captain, however, retained his composure, and while he directed a part of his small force to carry buckets of water to extinguish the flames, the other soldiers returned the fire of the Indians by a steady discharge of musketry, the assailants, during seven hours, abating no effort to carry the fort, and being for some time under the cover of a very dark night. In this protracted attack only three of the garrison were killed and three wounded, while the Indians suffered severely from their exposed situation. At six o'clock on the morning of the 5th, dispirited by their loss, they abandoned the attempt to carry the fort, and retired from the spot, after destroying all the provisions of the post, and killing or driving off all the horses and cattle.

The account of this affair by Captain Taylor, in a letter to General Harrison, dated the 10th of September, 1812, is his first official despatch, and has the unaffected spirit, without the experienced style, of his more mature productions.

The failure of their enterprise against Fort Harrison disheartened the Indians, and they abandoned for a time any further attempts against it; yet the garrison expected another attack, and Captain Taylor sent to General Harrison an account of his situation, and an application for assistance. A large force, under General Hopkins, was immediately sent to the relief of the garrison, then reduced to want by sickness, fatigue, and the loss of provisions.

The conduct of Taylor at Fort Harrison was not overlooked by his superior officers, by the public, or by the government. General Hopkins, in a letter to the governor of Kentucky, said of him: "The firm and almost unparalleled defence of Fort Harrison by Captain Zachary Taylor, has raised for him a fabric of character not to be effaced by eulogy." The president afforded a satisfactory proof of his favorable opinion, by conferring upon Taylor the rank of major by brevet—the oldest instance in the service of this species of promotion.

The Indians, notwithstanding their defeat, continued their depredations upon the inhabitants on the frontier, and to arrest their atrocities General Hopkins planned an expedition against the Indian villages on the Illinois, and commenced his march about the middle of October. But the volunteers under his command evinced insubordination, and the general resolved to abandon the expedition. The villages, however, were attacked by a detachment under Colonel Russell, and destroyed. In the following month, General Hopkins undertook a second expedition, directed against the Prophet's and Winebago town, in which Major Taylor took part, and received the commendations of the general. Several skirmishes occurred, in some of which our troops suffered severely. They succeeded in achieving their main objects, devastating the enemy's country and destroying their settlements. The winter forced both parties into a cessation of active hostilities. From this time to the close of the war with Great Britain, Major Taylor was engaged on the northwest frontier, accomplishing the purposes of the government with unremitting vigilance.

In 1814, Major Taylor commanded an expedition against the British and Indians on Rock river, a branch of the Mississippi. By order of General Howard, Major Taylor left Fort Independence, on the 2d August, at the head of a detachment of about three hundred and fifty men, and proceeded in boats up the Mississippi to Rock river, where they arrived on the 4th of September. The British and Indians being strongly posted near the mouth of the river, and well provided with artillery, commenced firing upon the Americans before they had an opportunity to land, and the boats were exposed to the fire of the artillery and musketry for a considerable time, which was returned by Taylor's troops, from small arms and the cannon on board the boats. The Americans then dropped down the river about three miles, and landed; being followed by the enemy, Taylor halted on a small prairie and prepared his troops for action, when the British and Indians hastily retired. The Americans in this affair had eleven men killed and wounded.

Taylor then called a council of his officers, and as the enemy was at least three to one in number to the Americans, it was decided that it would be madness to attack them in their position, without a prospect of success. Major Taylor therefore determined to drop down the river to the Des Moines rapids, and execute one of the principal objects of the expedition, namely, to erect a fort to command the river; which was done, and the same was called Fort Madison. The details of this expedition, Major Taylor communicated to General Howard, in an official despatch, dated September 6, 1814.

On the restoration of peace with Great Britain, in 1815, Congress adopted the policy of reducing the army and of annulling promotions made during the war. Among other officers who suffered from this policy was Major Taylor, who was reduced to the rank of captain; in consequence of which he resigned his commission, and left the service, returning to his family, from whom he had so long been separated, and resuming his agricultural pursuits.

In consequence of the influence of his friends, who were not content to see him retire from the army, for such a cause, he was reinstated by President Madison, in the course of the year, and consented again to leave his home and its attractions for the monotonous service of the army in time of peace. In 1816, Major Taylor was ordered to Green Bay, on Lake Michigan, and remained in command of that post for two years. Returning to Kentucky, he passed a year with his family, and was then ordered to join Colonel Russell at New Orleans. Except during a temporary absence, when recalled by the illness of his wife, he continued in the south for several years, generally engaged in some active duty. One of his labors was the opening of a military road, and another, the erection of Fort Jesup—the latter in 1822. On the 20th of April, 1819, Taylor received the commission of a lieutenant-colonel. In 1824, he was engaged at Louisville in the recruiting service, and in the latter part of that year he was ordered to the city of Washington.

In 1826, he was member of a board of officers of the army and militia (of which General Scott was president), convened by Mr. Barbour, then secretary of war, to consider and propose a system for the organization and improvement of the militia of the United States. In this board, Taylor's opinions were in favor of maintaining the militia strictly as citizen-soldiery, instead of giving them the character of a regular army, as proposed by some. The report drawn by General Scott, and adopted on motion of Colonel Taylor, was approved in Congress, but was not carried into effect.

Resuming his duties on the northwestern frontier, Taylor continued for five years in that position, where he seems to have been unconsciously preparing himself in his profession for the splendid achievements of his latter years. A writer in the "Literary World" thus mentions him: "As plain Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, I have often seen him putting his men through the battalion drill, on the northern banks of the Wisconsin, in the depth of February. This would seem only characteristic of the man who has since proved himself equally 'Rough and Ready' under the scorching sun of the tropics. But, looking back through long years to many a pleasant hour spent in the well-selected library of the post which Colonel Taylor then commanded, we recur now with singular interest to the agreeable conversations held in the room which was the colonel's favorite resort, amid the intervals of duty." And the same chronicler of his severe habits of discipline and study continues: "Nor will the reader think these personal reminiscences impertinent, when we add that our object in recurring to them here is simply to mention that, remembering alike the wintry drill and the snug book-room, Taylor's hardihood — the idea of which now so readily attaches to his soubriquet of 'Rough and Ready' — would certainly not then have struck a stranger as more characteristic than his liberal-minded intelligence."

In 1832, Taylor was promoted by President Jackson to the rank of colonel. During the previous year, the difficulties between the white settlers near Rock river, Illinois, and the Sac Indians under the celebrated chief Black Hawk, had been fomented, by bad and interested white men, to a point of open hostilities. Black Hawk and his brother the Prophet, at the head of a large party of Indians, having defeated an American volunteer force near Rock river, on the 14th of May, 1832, the people of Illinois became greatly alarmed, and the secretary of war ordered about a thousand regular troops, under the command of General Scott, to the scene of action, and active hostilities ensued, and continued for three months. In July, General Scott was reinforced by 2,500 men, under General Atkinson, including 400 regulars under Colonel Taylor. Toward the close of the month the Indians retreated into the wilderness, and General Atkinson, with a detachment of 1,300 men, including the regulars under Colonel Taylor, pursued them. By great perseverance, during a forced march, the Americans succeeded in overtaking the Indians near the junction of the Mississippi and Iowa rivers, where a desperate conflict ensued, which resulted in a total route of the Indians, many falling by our arms, others perishing in the river, and the rest dispersing or submitting themselves prisoners. The chief, Black Hawk, who then escaped, was in the course of the month surrendered by some of his faithless allies, and with his capture ended the war. The chief and his fellow-prisoners were confided to the charge of Colonel Taylor, who conveyed them to the Jefferson barracks, where they arrived about the middle of September.

After the Black Hawk war, Colonel Taylor was for a short time at

Louisville, with his family, and was thence ordered to Prairie du Chien, to the command of Fort Crawford, a work which had been erected under his superintendence. Here he remained until 1836, when his services were required in Florida, to assist in reducing the Seminole Indians to submission. To that field he immediately repaired, although he might with propriety have asked of the government a season of repose, having very rarely enjoyed the ease and tranquillity of home during a period of more than twenty-five years.

The Seminole Indians, the remnants of the aborigines of Florida, were required by the government of the United States to emigrate from that territory to lands appropriated for their occupation on the west of the Mississippi river. A treaty with the Seminole chiefs for the removal of their tribe was concluded at Payne's landing, in Florida, in May, 1832, by which treaty they were allowed three years to depart. The government was first advised in 1834 of their disinclination to leave their homes and those of their fathers. But as late as the spring of 1835, there was among the whites in Florida a confidence in the calm disposition of the Seminoles, and their willingness to submit to the destiny of their race. A daring chief, however, arose among this tribe, bearing the name of Osceola, destined to hold a place in history with other distinguished leaders of the aborigines who have resisted the progress of the Anglo-Saxons on this continent. By inheritance Osceola enjoyed no title or distinction among the Seminoles. He derived his origin from the Creeks, and had affected, until over thirty years of age, pacific feelings toward the whites. At length, throwing off disguise, he declared openly against the United States, supplanting himself the legitimate chiefs of the Seminoles; and he even put to death those who were for peaceful measures. He acquired perfect ascendency over his Indian brethren, and his signal war-cry met with a response from the remnants of the tribes who were still inhabitants of Florida. Murders were committed on the frontiers, and at one time even St. Augustine was threatened by the hostile Indians.

The United States troops at this time in Florida numbered about 500 men, stationed at several posts, General Clinch being in command. On the 23d of December, 1835, two companies under Major Dade, while marching to join the general, were surprised by a large body of Indians, and, after a protracted resistance, were all massacred, except three men, who, exhausted with wounds, escaped to tell the fate of their comrades. Open war now commenced. Many Creeks joined the Seminoles, and the United States government found it necessary to send in succession its most able officers and best troops into the field. On the part of the Indians, occasional success added vigor to their bold and cruel enterprises.

When Colonel Taylor reached Florida, the war with the Seminoles, began in 1835, had been prosecuted with indifferent success. General Jesup then had command of the army in this territory, and had made fruitless attempts to bring the war to a close. All friendly conferences with the chiefs, aided by a delegation of Cherokees as mediators, having failed, it was determined, in the autumn of 1837, to take more active measures against the Indians. Colonel Taylor received orders to seek out any portion of the enemy wherever to be found, and to destroy or capture the hostile forces. Accordingly, in pursuance of instructions from General Jesup, Colonel Taylor, with about 1,100 men, left Fort Gardner on the 20th of December, 1837, and through dense thickets of cypress, palmetto, and other underwood, the troops made their way to the everglades, where the Indians were concealed.

After a march of five days, the troops, on the 25th of December, reached a cypress swamp where they had evidence that a large body of the enemy were near. Taylor disposed his army in order of battle, and crossing the swamp, reached a large prairie, on the farther side of which was an extensive hammock, in which the Indians were posted. The American troops had penetrated but a short distance, when they were suddenly attacked by several hundred warriors, with their rifles. The shock for a time was fearlessly sustained, although several officers and men fell at the first fire. Seeing their leaders fall, some of the volunteers gave way, but soon after rallied, and the regular troops eagerly pressed on through the morass. Thrice the enemy wavered and gave ground, and thrice returned to the most desperate conflict ever maintained by their arms. The battle lasted for more than two hours, when the savages were driven from the field to their camp on the borders of Lake Okeechobee, being closely pursued by the regulars and volunteers until night closed in.

This battle of Okeechobee is one of the most memorable in our annals of Indian wars, as one of the most remarkable for bravery and skill on both sides. The American loss was very severe, 26 being killed, and 112 wounded, among whom were some of the most valuable officers in the service, including Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson, Colonel Gentry, Adjutant Center, Captain Van Swaringen, and others, among the slain. The loss of the Indians could not be ascertained, but in the opinion of Colonel Taylor it was about equal to that of our troops.

The immediate consequence of the battle of Okeechobee was the surrender of a number of Seminoles to the forces under the command of Colonel Taylor. The decisive action and dearly-bought victory of the Americans gave a death-blow to the power and daring defiance of the hostile tribe. Although outrages were frequently committed by small parties of savages, for a year or two afterward, the Seminoles were never again completely organized, as a tribe or nation, in opposition to the whites.

If the triumph of Taylor failed to reduce the whole body of Indians immediately to terms of peace, it still demanded and received the grateful recognition of the nation and the government. The sentiments of the latter were expressed in a general order from the war department, through

Major-General Macomb, commander-in-chief of the army, dated February 20, 1838, tendering the thanks of the president of the United States to Colonel Taylor, and the officers and troops under his command, for their gallant conduct in the battle with the Seminole Indians on the 25th of December.

This official acknowledgment was soon after followed by Taylor's promotion to the rank of brigadier-general by brevet, "for distinguished services in the battle of Kissimmee (Okeechobee), in Florida."

In April, 1838, the command of the troops in Florida was assigned to General Taylor; relieving General Jesup, at the request of the latter. In this responsible position Taylor's energies were devoted to the protection of the inhabitants from the attacks of the Indians, and the reduction of the latter to the authority of the United States. The perfect accomplishment of these objects was impracticable with the means and forces placed at the disposal of the commander. From time to time skirmishes with the Indians took place, and small parties of them were occasionally captured, or voluntarily surrendered. But they never could be brought to a general action, and continued, at intervals, their outrages upon the white inhabitants.

The United States government, toward the close of the year 1839, abandoned the policy which it had pursued in Florida, and determined to leave the Indians in their strongholds, and to confine the operations of the troops to the protection of the border settlements. In the general orders of the war department in November, 1839, the conduct of the commander was thus approved:—

"General Taylor, by the zealous and intelligent discharge of his duties, having given satisfaction to the department, will continue in command."

General Taylor's skill and energies were faithfully exerted to fulfil the designs of the government, but the force at his disposal was never adequate. Having labored four years in this thankless field, he was anxious to retire from it; and, at his own request, was relieved from the command, and was succeeded by General Armistead, in April, 1840.

The distinguished talents which General Taylor had displayed throughout his career in the army, were too well known and appreciated by the government to allow him to remain idle, or to be stationed at a post of inactivity. He was, therefore, immediately after leaving Florida, appointed to the command of the first department of the army in the southwest. This department included the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana, his headquarters being at Fort Jesup, in the latter state. In the summer of 1841, he was ordered to relieve General Arbuckle, at Fort Gibson, where he remained nearly five years, constantly engaged in disciplining his troops, and in other services pertaining to his command.

Having purchased an estate in Louisiana, General Taylor removed his family from Kentucky to Baton Rouge, on the banks of the Mississippi, where they continued to reside for some years. His constant occupation in the army gave him but few opportunities of enjoying the comforts of domestic retirement.

Soon after the annexation of Texas to the United States, General Taylor, who was then situated at Fort Jesup, Louisiana, received a confidential letter from the secretary of war, Mr. Marcy, dated May 28, 1845, instructing him to place his troops at such a position as would enable him to defend the territory of Texas in case of invasion from Mexico. The Congress of the United States, on the 1st of March, 1845, had passed a joint resolution giving its consent that the territory belonging to the republic of Texas might be erected into a new state, called the state of Texas; subject, however, to the adjustment by this government of "all questions of boundary that might arise with other governments."

The instructions of the war department to General Taylor, above referred to, implied clearly an apprehension that the consequence of the annexation of Texas might be a collision with Mexico. The secretary stated, that as soon as the Congress of Texas should assent to the act, and a convention should assemble and accept the terms offered in the joint annexation resolutions of the Congress of the United States, Texas would be regarded "as part of the United States, so far as to be entitled from this government to a defence from foreign invasion and Indian incursions." General Taylor was accordingly directed to keep his command in readiness for this duty. The anticipation of difficulty with Mexico was further indicated by instructions to General Taylor to open a correspondence with the authorities of Texas, or any diplomatic agent of the United States residing therein, with a view to information and advice in respect to the common Indian enemy, as well as to any foreign power; and also to employ his forces in defence of the Texan territory, if invaded by a foreign power, and to expel the invaders.

General Taylor was thus apprized of the service which might be expected of him. In July, 1845, he was informed by the war department, that the acceptance by Texas of the terms of annexation would probably be formally made by the Congress of that republic on the 4th of that month, and, in anticipation of that event, he was instructed to make an immediate forward movement with the troops under his command, and advance to the mouth of the Sabine, or to such other point on the gulf of Mexico, or its navigable waters, as might be most convenient for an embarkation at the proper time, for the western frontier of Texas.

The most expeditious route was recommended. The forces named for this duty were the 3d and 4th regiments of infantry, and seven companies of the 2d regiment of dragoons. The artillery was ordered from New Orleans.

In reply to inquiries by General Taylor of the war department, respecting the position he should take, he was directed, generally, to be governed by circumstances, to avoid all aggressive measures, and to hold his force ready to protect the territory of Texas "to the extent that it had been occupied by the people of Texas." The Rio Grande was indicated, by the secretary, as the boundary between Mexico and Texas, to which the army of occupation under Taylor was to approach, as nearly as prudence would permit. For this purpose it was necessary to pass the river Nueces.

On the 28th of June, Mr. Donelson, then United States minister to Texas, to whom General Taylor was referred for advice upon his movements, wrote him that he had best move his forces, "without delay, to the western frontier of Texas," and also informing him that Corpus Christi, on Aranzas bay (near the mouth of the Nueces), was the best point for the assembling of his troops. The same letter also admitted that the country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande was in dispute; the Texans holding Corpus Christi, and the Mexicans Santiago, at the mouth of the Rio Grande.

General Taylor embarked at New Orleans in July, 1845, and proceeded immediately with the forces under his command, 1,500 in number, to Aranzas bay, and in the beginning of August, 1845, had taken the position assigned him by the government. All the troops in the west, the northwest, and on the Atlantic, which could be spared, were ordered to join him. In November, 1845, by the report of the adjutant-general, his army consisted, in the aggregate, of 4,019 officers and men.

To the terms of the joint resolution of annexation, by the Congress of the United States, Texas assented by her ordinance of July, 1845, and, having formed her constitution, became virtually a state in the American Union. Three days after this (July 7th) the same convention requested the president of the United States to occupy the ports of Texas, and send an army to their defence. This desire the president of the United States immediately complied with (or in fact had already, as has been seen, anticipated).*

At the same time that instructions were sent to General Taylor by the war department, a naval force was despatched to the gulf of Mexico to aid him in any hostile operations which might occur.

General Taylor established his headquarters at Corpus Christi, where the army of occupation under his command remained encamped over six months. On the 8th of March, 1846, agreeably to instructions from the president of the United States to General Taylor, the advance of the army commenced its march for the Rio Grande, and the fourth day thereafter the entire forces were moving in a southerly direction over the disputed territory — the wilderness lying between the Nueces and that river. At the Arroya Colorado the troops encountered a body of Mexicans, who seemed disposed to dispute their passage. This, however, was not attempted, and the Americans continued their march. While approaching

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* Mansfield's History of the Mexican War.

Point Isabel, General Taylor was met by a deputation of citizens from Matamoras, on the Rio Grande, who handed him a protest, signed by the prefect of the district, against the occupation of the country by the American army. At this moment it was discovered that the buildings at Point Isabel were in flames, and believing that the place had been set on fire by the Mexican authorities, and considering the conflagration as a decided evidence of hostility, General Taylor dismissed the deputation, with the promise of an answer when he should arrive on the banks of the Rio Grande. Point Isabel, a small place with a few mean houses, had been selected as a depot for military stores for the American army, being the nearest port to Matamoras on the north. To preserve its buildings was therefore an object of moment, and the advance of the cavalry arrived in season to arrest the progress of the fire, after it had consumed but three or four houses. The Mexican port-captain who committed the act had made his escape.

The arrangements at this post being satisfactorily made, the general, with the cavalry, resumed the march toward Matamoras, and was joined by General Worth's command, which had encamped on the road. On the 28th of March, the army arrived on the banks of the Rio Grande, opposite Matamoras. Fortifications were immediately commenced, and soon a fort was erected, furnished with six bastions, and capable of containing two thousand men. It commanded the town of Matamoras, and was afterward called Fort Brown. On the other side the Mexicans also erected batteries and redoubts, both parties assuming the attitude of belligerents. An interview was held by direction of General Taylor, with the military authorities in Matamoras, but with no satisfactory result.

On the 10th of April the first American blood was shed by Mexican hands. Colonel Cross, deputy quartermaster-general, having rode out in the morning, for exercise, unattended, was killed as was supposed by some rancheros attached to the Mexican army; and his body was found on the 20th, when it was honored, by order of General Taylor, by a military funeral becoming the rank and character of the colonel.

A Mexican army having been concentrated on the Rio Grande, General Ampudia was placed in command, and arrived in Matamoras on the 11th of April. He had previously attempted to cause desertion among the soldiers of foreign birth in the American army, by issuing a circular addressed to them, in consequence of which some desertions, but unimportant as to numbers, took place. On the 12th of April, General Ampudia addressed a letter to General Taylor, concluding as follows:—

"By explicit and definite orders of my government, which neither can, will, nor should, receive new outrages, I require you in all form, and at latest in the peremptory term of twenty-four hours, to break up your camp, and retire to the other bank of the Nueces river, while our governments are regulating the pending question in relation to Texas. If you insist on remaining upon the soil of the department of Tamaulipas, it will clearly result that arms, and arms alone, must decide the question; and in that case I advise you that we accept the war to which, with so much injustice on your part, you provoke us; and that, on our part, this war shall be conducted conformably to the principles established by the most civilized nations; that is to say, that the law of nations and of war shall be the guide of my operations; trusting that on your part the same will be observed."

In his reply to this letter from General Ampudia, General Taylor informed the Mexican commander that, charged as he was in only a military capacity with the performance of specific duties, he could not enter into a discussion of the international question involved in the advance of the American arms, but reminded him that the government of the United States had constantly sought a settlement by negotiation of the question of boundary. He concludes his letter as follows:—

"The instructions under which I am acting will not permit me to retrograde from the position I now occupy. In view of the relations between our respective governments, and the individual suffering which may result, I regret the alternative which you offer; but, at the same time, wish it understood, that I shall by no means avoid such alternative, leaving the responsibility with those who rashly commence hostilities. In conclusion, you will permit me to give the assurance that, on my part, the laws and customs of war among civilized nations, shall be carefully observed."

To confirm these declarations, General Taylor continued to fortify his camp, and to make every disposition to resist an attack. General Ampudia soon gave place, as commanding officer at Matamoras, to General Arista, commander-in-chief of the northern division of the Mexican army. The reported accession to its force also created new expectations in the American camp that a decisive demonstration would soon be made against it. On the 19th of April, it was reported to General Taylor that two vessels with supplies for the Mexicans in Matamoras, were at the mouth of the Rio Grande. He immediately ordered a blockade of the river and enforced it by placing the United States brig Lawrence and a revenue-cutter to guard its mouth. To this act the Mexican general took umbrage, and having sent a note of remonstrance to General Taylor, and the answer of the American commander being unsatisfactory, the Mexicans prepared to make an attack upon Fort Brown.

In the meantime it was evident that Point Isabel was marked out by the Mexican commander as a place of contemplated attack, and it was rumored that a large Mexican force was crossing the Rio Grande for that purpose. To ascertain the truth of these reports, General Taylor sent out a scouting party under Captain Thornton, up the river, and a squadron of dragoons under Captain Ker down the river. The former were surprised by a party of Mexicans, sixteen were killed and wounded, and the remainder nearly all were taken prisoners. Lieutenant Mason was killed in the affray. Captain Thornton, at first escaping by an extraordinary leap of his horse over a hedge, was afterward captured and taken to Matamoras, where he remained for some time, but was finally given up. Captain Ker, with his detachment, after reconnoitring the country, returned, without having fallen in with the Mexicans. Three days after this affair, several of Captain Walker's Texan rangers were killed and wounded.

General Taylor, having received by the hands of Captain Walker of the Texan rangers information from Major Munroe, the commander at Point Isabel, of the attack of a party of Mexicans upon a wagon train, and from other causes being anxious for the safety of Point Isabel, where all the supplies for his army were deposited, resolved to march with his forces to the relief of that post. He left at Fort Brown a sufficient force of infantry and artillery to sustain a bombardment. He had previously sent a despatch to the governors of Louisiana and Texas, asking an immediate reinforcement of four regiments of militia from each state.

The plan of Arista, the Mexican general, it was believed, was to cross the Rio Grande, get in the rear of General Taylor's army, capture Point Isabel, and then fall on the American army. This plan was only prevented from being carried out by accidental information, brought to General Taylor by one of Thornton's party, sent in by the Mexican commander. The rapid return of the army under General Taylor to Point Isabel, was a consequence of this information, and the additional fact that the enemy was preparing to cross the river below. Either the Mexican army was dilatory in its movement, or the body detailed to cross below was unable to form a junction, for the forces of General Taylor, commencing their march from Fort Brown on the first of May, reached the depot at Point Isabel the following day, without encountering the enemy.

The Mexican general supposed that the movement of the Americans was a retreat, and at once ordered a large body of his troops across the Rio Grande. On the 3d of May, a heavy bombardment was commenced from the batteries in Matamoras on Fort Brown, where a garrison was left by General Taylor. During the night of the 4th, the Mexicans also erected a battery in the rear of Fort Brown, and the next morning opened a fire upon the fort simultaneously with the batteries on the opposite bank of the river. The bombardment was continued at intervals until the 10th, when the gallant defenders of the fort were relieved by the return of the main army under General Taylor, which had just fought the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. In the defence of the fort, Major Brown, Captain Hawkins, and Captain Mansfield, were greatly distinguished for skill and gallantry. The former was killed by a shell, and was succeeded in command by Captain Hawkins.

General Taylor, having garrisoned the depot at Point Isabel with new troops, commenced his return to Fort Brown on the 7th of May, at the head of two thousand, three hundred men, and a supply-train of three hundred wagons. The army encamped at night about seven miles from Point Isabel, and resumed their march on the following morning, the 8th of May. At noon, the Mexican forces were observed, drawn up in battle array, upon a prairie three miles from Palo Alto. General Taylor immediately prepared for action, and at two o'clock in the afternoon, gave orders to advance. The Mexican cannon opened upon them, when the American troops were deployed into line, and the light artillery under the command of Major Ringgold poured forth its rapid and deadly fire upon the enemy. The Mexican cavalry, mostly lancers, were on their left, and were forced back by the destructive discharges of artillery. On the left wing of the American army, attacks of the Mexicans were met by Duncan's battery, and by other troops of that division. The combat on the American side was chiefly carried on by artillery; and never was there a more complete demonstration of the superior skill and energy of that arm of service, as conducted by the accomplished graduates of West Point. He who was the life and leader of the light artillery — Major Ringgold — was in this engagement mortally wounded, and died in a few days.*

The battle, which lasted about five hours, terminated with the possession by the Americans of the field, and the retreat during the night of the Mexicans. The strength of the Mexicans was estimated by General Taylor at about six thousand men, with seven pieces of artillery and eight hundred cavalry. Their loss was at least two hundred killed and four hundred wounded; that of the Americans was nine killed and forty-four wounded.

General Taylor with his troops encamped on the field of battle, and resumed his march at two, P. M., the following day. In two hours the army came in sight of the Mexicans, who had taken a position on a ravine called Resaca de la Palma. They had formed a battery so as to sweep the road, and were otherwise strongly posted. The action commenced by the fire of the Mexican artillery, which the Americans returned by discharges from Ridgely's battery, and by the infantry on the wings. In this firing the Mexican cannon were well managed by Generals La Vega and Reguena, and the effect was severely felt in the American lines. It was necessary to dislodge them, and this duty was assigned by General Taylor to Captain May of the dragoons. It was here that this officer became so distinguished by his gallant charge upon the enemy's batteries. The artillerymen were dispersed and General La Vega taken prisoner. The regiments of infantry now charged the Mexican line and the battle was soon ended. Their columns were broken by successive charges and unable to bear the continued fire poured upon them by the American infantry and artillery. The Mexicans fled from the field, rapidly pursued by the Americans, and ceased not their flight till those who were not taken prisoners had either crossed the Rio Grande or were drowned in its waters. The enemy's loss in this engagement was very great; nearly two hundred of their dead were buried by the Americans the day after the battle. Their loss in killed, wounded, and missing, in the two affairs of the 8th and 9th, was estimated by General Taylor at one thousand men. The loss of the Americans was thirty-nine killed and eighty-three wounded, in the last battle. The actual number of American troops engaged with the enemy, on the 9th, did not exceed seventeen hundred, while that of the Mexican army, which had been reinforced after the action of the 8th, was estimated at six thousand.

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* Mansfield's History of the War.

In a detailed report of these battles, General Taylor remarked: "Our victory has been decisive. A small force has overcome immense odds of the best troops that Mexico can furnish — veteran regiments, perfectly equipped and appointed. Eight pieces of artillery, several colors and standards, a great number of prisoners, including fourteen officers, and a large amount of baggage and public property, have fallen into our hands. The causes of victory are doubtless to be found in the superior quality of our officers and men."

In these engagements, General Taylor displayed the utmost coolness and bravery — exposing himself in the most dangerous positions, and encouraging the troops by his heroic example. After the battles, his attention to the wounded and the dying, whether friend or foe, evinced that sympathy with suffering humanity which is ever inseparable from true courage.*

The intelligence of hostilities on the Rio Grande, occasioned a powerful excitement in the United States. Congress was then in session, and the president, on the receipt of the news of the capture of Captain Thornton's party, immediately sent in his special message of May 11, 1846, in which he declared that the Mexican government, had "at last invaded our territory, and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil." Congress with less than two days' deliberation, on the 13th of May, declared that "by the act of the republic of Mexico, war exists between that government and the United States;" and at the same time passed a law authorizing the president to accept the services of fifty thousand volunteers, and appropriating ten millions of dollars toward carrying on the war. The intention was to put an end to the war by a vigorous effort, and decisive victories.

Four days before this declaration by Congress, as we have seen, the decisive battle of Resaca de la Palma had been fought, and the army of Arista pursued beyond the Rio Grande. The Mexican general saved

* Mansfield.

himself by flight, and quite unattended, he made his way across the river. General La Vega and a few other officers were sent on parole to New Orleans.

On the 11th of May, General Taylor leaving Colonel Twiggs in command of his army, repaired to Point Isabel, for the purpose of arranging with Commodore Connor of the gulf squadron, a combined attack on Matamoras. At Point Isabel a command of regulars and volunteers just arrived from Louisiana and Alabama, was organized under Colonel Wilson; and on the 15th, marched for Brazos, and with the aid of the squadron, crossed the river at its mouth, and marched upon the town, which the colonel occupied on the 17th of May; being the first landing of an American force on the right bank of the Rio Grande. The day before this expedition left Point Isabel, General Taylor also set out on his return to the camp on the river, where he speedily arrived, and at once commenced preparations for an attack on Matamoras. On the 17th of May, Arista sent a deputation to Taylor to ask for an armistice, until the two governments should settle the difficulties pending. This was refused by the American general, as it was apparent that time was only wanted to remove the munitions of war from Matamoras. But during the conference, Arista succeeded in taking away part of the military stores, and with the fragment of his army he abandoned Matamoras, and fled precipitately toward Monterey.

On the 18th of May, General Taylor with his army, crossed the Rio Grande, and entered Matamoras without opposition. Formal possession was taken of the city, and Colonel Twiggs appointed military governor. The day following, Lieutenant-Colonel Garland, with the cavalry of the army, was sent in pursuit of the Mexicans under Arista, but being ignorant of the country, which they found so barren as to afford insufficient support to the horses, the American troops were forced to return, after pursuing the flying enemy about sixty miles.

From May until September, General Taylor remained in camp with his army at Matamoras, awaiting the orders of his government, receiving reinforcements, and making preparations for marching into the interior. His operations were paralyzed during the summer, by the want of suitable boats to navigate the Rio Grande. In the meantime, the executive and Congress had highly approved of his course, and on the 30th of May, the president transmitted to him a commission as major-general by brevet, bearing the date of the battle of the 9th of May. On the 29th of June, he was promoted to the full rank of major-general.

On the day that General Taylor entered Matamoras, a United States squadron arrived off Vera Cruz, and commenced the blockade of that and other ports on the gulf of Mexico; and during the summer the towns of Mier, Camargo, Revilla, and Reynosa, submitted to the Americans, and became stations for different divisions of the army. Camargo, a town about one hundred and eighty miles above the mouth of the Rio Grande, was the point selected as the depot of supplies. Here the various divisions which were to compose the particular army of General Taylor were gradually concentrated.

The reinforcements and supplies for the American army in Mexico which had been forwarded during the summer were at length sufficient to justify an advance into the interior. The Rio Grande was assumed as the military base line of operations. The entire army of General Taylor consisted of about nine thousand men. A small portion was assigned to garrisons, while the main body, numbering six thousand, six hundred, was destined for Monterey, the capital city of New Leon, and of the northern division of Mexico. The city contained about fifteen thousand inhabitants and is situated on a branch of the San Juan river, near the base of the Sierra Madre mountains. Both the natural and artificial defences of Monterey were very strong; but neither the extent of the defences, nor the number of the garrisons within them, seem to have been fully known to the American army previous to its arrival in front of the city.

The army under Taylor was in three divisions commanded respectively by Brigadier-Generals Twiggs (who had been promoted to that station) and Worth, and Major-General Butler. On the 20th of August, General Worth began his march for Monterey; and on the 5th of September, General Taylor left Camargo; a garrison of two thousand men remaining behind. Worth reached Ceralvo, about seventy miles, on the 25th of August, and at that point sent out reconnoitring parties who discovered strong bodies of the enemy in front. He advanced to the village of Marin, where the entire army was in a few days concentrated, under the command of General Taylor. On the 19th of September, the army arrived at Walnut Springs, three miles from Monterey, after a few skirmishes only with parties of Mexican cavalry.

Monterey was then under the command of General Ampudia, and the garrison under his command consisted of about seven thousand regular troops, and two or three thousand irregular troops. Notwithstanding this strong garrison, superior in numbers to the American army, General Taylor thought it possible to carry the place by storm, with the bayonet and artillery. Reconnoisances of the works were made on the evening of the 19th.*

Besides the numerous and well-constructed fortresses mounted with heavy cannon, which had been erected for the defence of Monterey; the plan of the city itself is well adapted to defensive warfare. The streets being straight, a few pieces of artillery can command their entire length. The stone walls of the houses rise above the roofs, thus forming regular parapets which afford thorough protection to the defenders. Each dwelling is thus a separate castle, and the whole city one grand fortification, suggested by nature and consummated by art.

* Mansfield.

On the night of the 20th of September, General Worth's advanced columns marched and occupied for the night a defensive position on the Saltillo road, just without the range of the enemy's batteries. The attack commenced on the 21st, by General Worth's forces, and continued, in connexion with other divisions of the army, all the next day. On the 23d, the assault became general, and a desperate conflict ensued in the streets of the city. From the strong stone houses, volleys of musketry dealt death in all directions among the American troops, but they steadily advanced from house to house, and from square to square, until the main body of the enemy had retired from the lower part of the city, to make a stand behind their barricades.

General Taylor then withdrew his troops to the works which had been evacuated by the Mexicans, and determined to concert with General Worth a combined attack upon the town the following day. But early in the morning of the 24th, General Ampudia sent a communication to the American commander, proposing to evacuate the town General Taylor acceded to a personal interview with General Ampudia, as the latter had desired, and it was finally agreed that the city should be surrendered to General Taylor, and the material of war, with certain exceptions, and the Mexican troops were allowed to evacuate the following day. As soon as they had left, the division under General Worth was quartered in the city, and quiet reigned among the inhabitants. The American troops during the various contests at Monterey, had twelve officers and one hundred and eight men killed; thirty-one officers, and three hundred and thirty-seven wounded. The Mexican loss was not known, but believed considerably to exceed these numbers. The force under General Taylor at this siege was four hundred and twenty-five officers, and six thousand, two hundred and twenty men, accompanied with nineteen cannon. The town and works were armed with forty-two pieces of cannon well supplied with ammunition, and manned, as before stated, with a force of nearly ten thousand men.

In the transactions attending the capture of the city, General Taylor had hoped to secure the approbation of government. In this, however, he was disappointed. Not only were the terms of capitulation considered as entirely too lenient, but he was even blamed for not having carried the defences by assault, and thus making the garrison unconditional prisoners. Time, however, has shown, that by such a course, his little army would have endured appalling loss, without corresponding advantages; and that General Taylor's course, dictated as it was by humanity and honor, was the most advantageous to his troops and to the country that he could possibly have adopted.

General Taylor now established his headquarters at Monterey, despatching General Worth, on the 12th of November, with twelve hundred men and eight pieces of artillery, to Saltillo; and General Wool, who was on his march from Texas, toward Chihuahua, was directed by Taylor, in

November, to abandon the expedition, and advance with his column of two thousand and four hundred men to Parras, a place south of Saltillo. Here the army of General Wool remained for a short time until, in the month of December, it joined the division of Worth at Saltillo.

On the 13th of November, General Taylor followed General Worth's division to Saltillo, escorted by two squadrons of dragoons. This town is the capital of the state of Coahuila, and is distant sixty-five miles southwest from Monterey. It was considered by Taylor as an important point for occupation, for three reasons: first, as a necessary outpost of the main force at Monterey, covering as it does the defile which leads from the low country to the table land, and also the route to Monclova; secondly, as controlling a region from which to obtain supplies of provisions, viz., the fertile country around Parras; thirdly, as the capital of Coahuila, which renders it important in a political point of view.

General Taylor represented to the war department the difficulties to be encountered in a forward movement upon the city of San Luis Potosi, and with regard to a proposed expedition against Vera Cruz, he gave it as his opinion that twenty-five thousand troops would be properly required to take possession of Vera Cruz, and march thence against the city of Mexico. He proposed to proceed with the preparation for a movement on Tampico, if approved by the department, but his designs were not carried into effect. A movement against San Luis, he remarked, should not be undertaken except with a force so large as to render success certain. That force he considered should be at least 20,000 strong, as he supposed the Mexicans able to concentrate a force of 40,000 to 50,000 men at San Luis, which is a city of about 60,000 inhabitants, distant three hundred miles from Saltillo, nearly six hundred miles from the Rio Grande, and five hundred from the city of Mexico.

Having made arrangements for the occupation of the state of Coahuila, and left with General Worth at Saltillo a squadron of dragoons, General Taylor returned to Monterey, where, on the 25th of November, he learned officially of the occupation of Tampico by the naval forces under Commodore Perry. On the requisition of the commodore, with the approval of General Taylor, a regiment and six companies from Taylor's army were ordered to Tampico to garrison that town.

On the 15th of December, General Taylor left Monterey for Victoria, the capital of Tamaulipas, which place he designed to occupy, and concentrate there a portion of his army. On his way thither he received information from General Worth at Saltillo, that Santa Anna, then in command of the Mexican army at San Luis, designed taking advantage of the diversion of force toward Victoria, by a rapid movement, strike a heavy blow at the American troops at Saltillo, and, if successful, another at General Wool's force at Parras. General Taylor, therefore, thought proper to return to Monterey with the regular forces, and thus be in a position to reinforce Saltillo, if necessary. The volunteers under General Quitman were ordered to continue their march and effect a junction with General Patterson, at Victoria. At the same time, Generals Butler and Wool moved rapidly from Monterey and Parras to join General Worth, who had advised them of a probable attack on his position. General Taylor had proceeded beyond Monterey, on his way to Saltillo, when, on the 20th of December, he received information that the expected concentration and movement of the Mexican troops upon Saltillo had not taken place. Deeming the force present and sent forward to that place sufficient to repel any demonstration from San Luis Potosi, General Taylor again marched with General Twiggs's division toward Victoria.

On the 29th of December, General Quitman entered Victoria without opposition. The enemy had a body of 1,500 cavalry in the town, which fell back as the Americans approached. General Taylor arrived there with the troops of General Twiggs on the 4th of January, and was joined on the same day by the force which General Patterson conducted from Matamoras. The force collected at Victoria was over 5,000 strong.

While General Taylor was thus maturing his operations, the American government had determined to concentrate the largest possible number of regulars and experienced volunteers in the attack upon Vera Cruz, and the march thence to the city of Mexico. General Scott was charged with the command of the expedition, and immediately took measures to secure its success. On the 25th of November, General Scott wrote General Taylor from New York, informing him that he expected to be on the Rio Grande about the 20th of December, on his way to carry out the object of an expedition, the particulars of which, as despatches had been lost, he did not deem it prudent to communicate. "I shall be obliged," he says, "to take from you most of the gallant officers and men (regulars and volunteers) whom you have so long and so nobly commanded. I am afraid that I shall, by imperious necessity—the approach of yellow fever on the gulf coast—reduce you, for a time, to stand on the defensive. This will be infinitely painful to you, and for that reason distressing to me. But I rely upon your patriotism to submit to the temporary sacrifice with cheerfulness."

In consequence of the plan thus declared, the regular troops (with the exception of a very small body of the troops which composed his army in the month of November), the division of General Worth at Saltillo, of General Patterson at Victoria, the brigades of Generals Quitman and Twiggs at the same place, and all other corps which could possibly be drawn from the field of operations, of which the Rio Grande was the base, were ordered to Vera Cruz. To maintain his position at Saltillo, General Taylor was left with about five thousand men, only five hundred being regulars. On parting with the troops who had so faithfully served with him, he issued an order expressing his deep sensibility and attachment toward them, and his deep regret that he could not participate with those who were making their first campaign in its eventful scenes. To all, both officers and men, he extended "his heartfelt wishes for their continued success and happiness, confident that their achievements on another theatre would redound to the credit of their country and its arms."

In January, 1847, General Taylor left Victoria, and established his headquarters at Monterey, where, early in February, his force, including recent reinforcements of volunteers, amounted to between 6,000 and 7,000 men. Soon after reaching Monterey he received information that a party of dragoons had been surprised at Encarnacion, also that another party, with Captain Cassius M. Clay and Majors Borland and Gaines were taken prisoners.

While the United States were preparing to attack Vera Cruz, and endeavoring to maintain the positions gained by the northern divisions of the army, under Generals Taylor, Wool, and Kearny, Mexico was also preparing for a decisive blow. In December, the Mexican Congress assembled at the capital. Santa Anna was elected provisional president, and Gomez Farias vice president, of the republic. The command of the army was undertaken by Santa Anna personally, he having recently returned to Mexico from exile at Havana, and devoted himself with zeal to restore domestic order, to unite parties, to devise measures of finance, and to raise and equip troops. Notwithstanding every embarrassment, Santa Anna had concentrated at San Luis Potosi, before the end of January, 1847, an army of more than 21,000 men, prepared to march thence against the divisions of General Taylor's force between Saltillo and the Rio Grande. On the first of February the Mexican army was moving rapidly upon that town, upward of three hundred miles distant from San Luis. The march was arduous, from the great distance over a desert, want of water and provisions, and from the severity of the weather. On the 20th of February they reached Encarnacion, and the next day advanced on Saltillo.*

The army of Santa Anna was admirably equipped. It was composed of the flower of the Mexican nation, and numbered more than four to one of the army which it came to conquer. Hope and dire necessity both urged them to victory. The commander, Santa Anna, had well considered the advantages he would derive from this movement, if successful, and all the chances were in his favor. Could he have driven General Taylor from his position at Buena Vista, he would have swept down to Camargo, and over the whole valley of the Rio Grande. All the munitions of war of the Americans would have fallen into his hands. If defeated, Santa Anna well knew that his moral power over his army would be broken. The fate of his country seemed suspended on the issue of a single battle. His own fame, his place in history, were both to be decided in the coming conflict.†

* Fry's Life of Taylor.

† Mansfield.

General Wool had continued in command of the division of the American army at Saltillo. Near the end of January, he advised General Taylor of the rumored advance of Santa Anna, then organizing his forces at San Luis, as has been mentioned. In consequence of this information, although at that time indefinite, General Taylor determined at once to meet the enemy, if opportunity should be offered ; and leaving a garrison of fifteen hundred men at Monterey, he took up his line of march on the 31st with a reinforcement for the column of General Wool. On the 2d of February, he reached Saltillo, and on the 4th he advanced to Agua Nueva, a strong position on the San Luis road, twenty miles south of Saltillo. Here he encamped until the 21st, when he received intelligence that Santa Anna was advancing with his whole army. Having carefully examined the various positions and defiles of the mountains, Taylor decided that Buena Vista, a strong mountain pass, eleven miles nearer Saltillo, was the most favorable point to make a stand against a force so overwhelming. He therefore fell back to that place, and at noon of the 21st, encamped to await the approach of Santa Anna, then within one day's march of this position.

The position of the American army at this moment was most critical. The regular troops had been withdrawn, with the exception of a few companies of artillery and dragoons. The volunteers, of which the army was mainly composed, had received some instruction in the regular duties of the camp, but had not attained that perfection in discipline which gives confidence in military operations.*

The position selected by General Taylor to receive with his small army, the forces of the Mexican chief — five times the number of the Americans — was one of remarkable natural strength. It was at a point where the main road from San Luis to Saltillo, passes between closely-approximating chains of mountains. The bases of these mountains are cut, by the occasional torrents of rain, into numerous deep gullies, almost impassable, owing to the rugged and steep banks leaving between them elevated table-lands or plateaus, of various extent. On the west of the road, and nearly parallel to it, between Agua Nueva and Buena Vista, is also a ditch, forming one of the mountain drains on that side. The American army was drawn up at nearly right angles to the road, its chief force being on the east of it, occupying a large plateau commanding the mountain side. Facing the south, this force constituted the left wing. A battery of light artillery occupied the road, and the right wing rested on the opposite hill. In this attitude, the Americans awaited the advance of the Mexicans, on the morning of the 22d of February, the birthday of Washington.

On the 21st, General Taylor had proceeded with a small force to Saltillo (nine miles from Buena Vista), to make some arrangements for the defence of the town, leaving General Wool in command of the troops.

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* Mansfield.

Before those arrangements at Saltillo were completed, on the morning of the 22d, Taylor was advised that the enemy was in sight, advancing. Hastening to the battle-field, he found that the Mexican cavalry advance was in front, having marched from Encarnacion, over forty miles distant, at eleven o'clock on the day previous, and driving in an American mounted force left at Agua Nueva, to cover the removal of public stores.

The features of the ground occupied by the American troops were such as nearly to paralyze the artillery and cavalry of the Mexicans, while their infantry could not derive all the advantages of its numerical superiority. At eleven o'clock, General Taylor received from General Santa Anna, a summons to surrender at discretion, to which the American commander immediately replied, "declining to accede to the request." The enemy still forbore his attack, evidently waiting for the arrival of his rear columns. The Mexican light troops commenced the action by engaging the Americans on the extreme left, and kept up a sharp fire, climbing the mountain-side, and apparently endeavoring to gain the flank of the Americans. The skirmishing of the light troops was kept up until dark; when General Taylor became convinced that no serious attack would be made before morning, and returned, with a regiment and squadron of dragoons, to Saltillo. The troops bivouacked without fires, and laid upon their arms. A body of fifteen hundred Mexican cavalry under General Minon, had entered the valley through a narrow pass east of Saltillo, and had evidently been thrown in the rear of the Americans, to break up and harass the retreat which was so confidently expected by Santa Anna.

Having made the necessary dispositions for the protection of the rear, General Taylor returned to Buena Vista, on the morning of the 23d, ordering forward all the available troops from Saltillo. The action had commenced before his arrival on the field.

During the night of the 22d, the Mexicans had thrown a body of light troops on the mountain-side, with the purpose of outflanking the left of the Americans; and it was here that the action of the 23d, commenced at an early hour. The American riflemen in this position maintained their ground handsomely against a greatly superior force. About eight o'clock, a strong demonstration was made against the American centre, a heavy Mexican column moving along the road; which was soon dispersed by the fire from Captain Washington's battery. In the meantime, a large force of Mexican infantry and cavalry was concentrated under cover of the ridges, with the obvious intention of forcing the left of the Americans. It was found impossible to check the advance of the Mexican infantry, although the American artillery was served against it with great effect, under the orders of Captain O'Brien. When General Taylor arrived upon the field, the left wing of his army had become completely outflanked, and the enemy was pouring masses of infantry and cavalry along the base of the mountain; thus gaining the rear of the Americans in great force. Taylor immediately directed the left to be strengthened by detachments of Captains Bragg and Sherman's artillery, also by bodies of cavalry. The action was for a long time warmly sustained at that point, the enemy making efforts both with infantry and cavalry, against the American line, and being always repulsed with heavy loss.

At one period, the position of that portion of the Mexican army which had gained the rear of the Americans was very critical, and it seemed doubtful whether it could regain the main body. At that moment, General Taylor received from General Santa Anna a message by a staff-officer, desiring to know what he wanted. Taylor despatched General Wool to the Mexican commander, and ordered his own troops to cease firing. General Wool could not, however, cause the Mexicans to cease their fire, and returned, without having an interview with Santa Anna. The extreme right of the Mexicans retreated along the base of the mountain, and finally, in spite of the efforts of the Americans, effected a junction with the remainder of the army.

During the day, the Mexican cavalry under General Minon, had ascended the elevated plain above Saltillo, and occupied the road from that city to the field of battle. Several skirmishes took place between them and the small bodies of troops left by General Taylor to protect his rear. General Minon made one or two efforts with his cavalry to charge the artillery, but this body of Mexicans were finally driven back in a confused mass, and did not again appear upon the plain.

In the meantime the firing had partially ceased upon the principal field, at Buena Vista. The enemy seemed to confine his efforts to the protection of his artillery, and General Taylor had left the plateau for a moment, when he was recalled thither by a heavy musketry fire. He then discovered that a portion of his infantry, the Illinois and Kentucky volunteers, had engaged a greatly superior force of the enemy — evidently his reserve — and that they had been overwhelmed by numbers. The moment was most critical. Captain O'Brien had lost his two pieces of artillery, which had been taken by the Mexicans — his infantry support being entirely routed. Captain Bragg, who had just arrived from the left, was ordered at once into battery, without any infantry to support him, and at the imminent risk of losing his guns, this officer came rapidly into action, the Mexican line being but a few yards from the muzzle of his pieces. The first discharge of canister caused the enemy to hesitate, the second and third drove him back in disorder, and saved the day. The second Kentucky regiment, which had advanced beyond supporting distance in this affair, was driven back and closely pressed by the enemy's cavalry. Taking a ravine which led in the direction of Captain Washington's battery, their pursuers became exposed to his fire, which soon checked and drove them back with loss. In the meantime, the rest of the American artillery had taken position on the plateau, covered by the Mississippi and third Indiana regiments, the former of which had reached the ground in time to pour a fire into the right flank of the enemy, and thus contribute to his repulse. In this last conflict the Americans sustained a very heavy loss. Colonel Hardin of Illinois, and Colonels M'Kee and Clay of Kentucky, fell at this time, while gallantly leading their commands. Colonel Yell of Arkansas, and Adjutant Vaughan of Kentucky, had previously fallen.

No further attempt was made by the Mexicans to force the position of the Americans, and the approach of night gave an opportunity to pay proper attention to the wounded, and also to refresh the soldiers, who had been exhausted by incessant watchfulness and combat. Though the night was severely cold, the troops were compelled for the most part, to bivouack without fires, expecting that morning would renew the conflict. During the night the wounded were removed to Saltillo, and every preparation made to receive the enemy, should he again attack the American position. Seven fresh companies were drawn from the town, and Brigadier-General Marshall, with a reinforcement of Kentucky cavalry, and four pieces of artillery, was near at hand, when it was discovered that the enemy had abandoned his position during the night. Scouts soon ascertained that the Mexican army had fallen back upon Agua Nueva. The great disparity of numbers, and the exhaustion of Taylor's troops, rendered it inexpedient and hazardous to attempt pursuit. A staff officer was despatched to General Santa Anna to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, which was satisfactorily completed on the following day. The Americans collected and buried their own dead, and the Mexican wounded, of which a large number had been left upon the field, were removed to Saltillo, and rendered as comfortable as circumstances would permit.*

On the evening of the 26th it was ascertained that, excepting a small body of cavalry left at Agua Nueva, the Mexican army had retreated in the direction of San Luis Potosi. On the 27th, General Taylor advanced with his troops and resumed his former camp at Agua Nueva, the Mexican rear guard evacuating the place as the Americans approached, leaving a considerable number of wounded behind. It was Taylor's purpose to beat up the enemy's quarters at Encarnacion early the next morning, but upon examination, the weak condition of the cavalry horses rendered it unadvisable to attempt so long a march without water. Colonel Belknap, with a detachment of troops, was despatched to Encarnacion on the 1st of March. Some two hundred wounded and about sixty Mexican soldiers were found there, the army of Santa Anna, having passed on in the direction of Matehula, with greatly reduced numbers, and suffering much from hunger. The dead and dying were strewed upon the road, and crowded the buildings of the hacienda.

The American loss at the battle of Buena Vista, was 267 killed, 456 wounded, and 23 missing; that of the Mexicans in killed and wounded was estimated by General Taylor, and admitted by Santa Anna, to exceed 1500. At least 500 of their killed were left upon the field of battle. The loss of the Americans was especially severe in officers — 28 having been killed upon the field, and 41 wounded.

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* General Taylor's official despatch.

In a private letter to General E. G. W. Butler, General Taylor referred to certain incidents of the battle. Among other remarks he says: "For several hours the fate of the day was extremely doubtful; so much so, that I was urged by some of the most experienced officers to fall back and take a new position. This I knew it would never do to attempt with volunteers, and at once declined it. Between the several deep ravines, there were portions of level land from one to four hundred yards in extent, which became alternately points of attack and defence, after our left was turned, by both sides. These extended along and near the base of the mountain for about two miles, and the struggle for them may be very appropriately compared to a game of chess. Night put a stop to the contest, and, strange to say, both armies occupied the same positions they did in the morning before the battle commenced. Our artillery did more than wonders.

"We lay on our arms all night, as we had done the two preceding ones, without fires, ready and expecting to renew the contest the next morning; but we found at daylight the enemy had retreated during the night.

"I hope the greater portion of the good people of the country will be satisfied with what we have done on this occasion. I flatter myself that our compelling a Mexican army of more than twenty thousand men, completely organized, and led by their chief magistrate, to retreat, with less than five hundred regulars, and about four thousand volunteers, will meet their approval. I had not a single company of regular infantry; the whole was taken from me."

The news of the victory of Buena Vista was received in the United States as the crowning evidence of Taylor's generalship. He had assumed the responsibility of holding his position beyond Monterey. Knowing his resources and trusting in his officers and troops, he hesitated not to risk everything on the field against the host of Santa Anna. He has himself done justice to the brilliant part which General Wool bore in the action, approving all the preliminary dispositions of that able commander. He has also borne testimony to the services of all others who took part in the action, and expressed his sympathies with the friends of those who had fallen. It was the province of the nation, in return, to acknowledge the surpassing merit of the commander-in-chief. That merit was acknowledged in every form of popular rejoicing and congratulation. Cities and states were emulous in exhibitions of sympathy for his trials, exultation for his success, and respect for his character.*

The importance of the victory at Buena Vista (says Mansfield) can not be exaggerated. It secured the whole frontier of the Rio Grande, and struck terror and dismay into the hearts of the Mexican nation. It was, in fact, the first great turning point of the war.

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* Fry's Life of Taylor.

General Taylor, on the 2d of March, intrusted to one of his aids, Mr. Thomas L. Crittenden, of Kentucky, the official reports of the battle of Buena Vista, to be conveyed to Washington. He was escorted by Major Giddings, commanding 260 infantry and two pieces of artillery, and having in charge also one hundred and fifty wagons. Near Ceralvo, on tho road to Camargo, the escort was attacked by 1,600 Mexican cavalry and infantry, under Generals Urrea and Romaro. After a brief and gallant struggle the enemy was repulsed, with the loss of 45 killed and wounded. The Americans lost 17 men, of whom 15 were teamsters. General Taylor, subsequently hearing that Urrea was in command of a still larger force, pursued him with about 1,200 volunteers, and two companies of Bragg's artillery, as far as Caidereta, where he learned that the Mexicans had crossed the mountains. General Taylor then returned to the camp at Walnut Springs, three miles from Monterey, where he established his headquarters.

The operations of General Scott, at Vera Cruz and other points on the gulf of Mexico, and the brilliant series of successes of that officer and the troops under his command, in the march from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico, terminating in the capture and occupation of that capital by the American troops, in September, transferred the seat of war to that quarter. Consequently, General Taylor remained for some months in comparative inactivity, at his headquarters near Monterey. Actual hostilities with Mexico having been practically brought to an end, with the exception of skirmishes with guerilla parties, General Taylor obtained permission to visit his family at Baton Rouge, in Louisiana, from whom he had now been absent for about two years.

Accordingly, in November, 1847, he left the command of the army with General Wool, and took his departure for the United States, by the way of Camargo, Matamoras, and Point Isabel, at which last place he embarked in a steamer for New Orleans, and arrived below that city on the 1st of December. He landed at the barracks, where he met his family, and remained two days. He was greeted by salutes of cannon, display of flags, and the cheers of the people. On the 3d the general proceeded to the city, where he was received with transports of enthusiasm and joy by his fellow-citizens anxious to welcome him to his home. Along the shores of the Mississippi, as far as the eye could reach, gay streamers floated on the breeze from ships of every nation, and the numerous steamboats on the river added to the interest of the scene.

General Taylor was accompanied by several officers of his staff, among whom was Major Bliss, assistant adjutant-general, who had accompanied him in all his campaigns and battles in Mexico. On landing at New

Orleans, a vast procession was formed, and the general was conducted to the St. Charles hotel, where he received the calls of several thousand citizens. To the address of the mayor, welcoming him to the city, the general made a modest and appropriate reply, expressive of his gratitude at this reception by the people of New Orleans. On the following day he visited the Roman catholic cathedral, and was welcomed in an eloquent address by Bishop Blanc. A magnificent sword that had been voted by the legislature of Louisiana, was presented by Governor Johnson, with appropriate remarks, to which General Taylor replied in language of deep feeling at the honor done him.

On the 5th of December, General Taylor left the city in a steamer, for his home in Baton Rouge. On the way thither he was greeted with the most enthusiastic cheers from people on the banks of the river, and on board of steamers and other vessels. From that time he remained to enjoy the quiet of domestic retirement, of which he had so long been deprived, until summoned by the people to accept of new honors, and to enter upon the duties of the most important office in their gift.

The brilliant achievements of Taylor during his campaigns in Mexico, so much attracted the admiration of the people of the United States, that a strong desire was early manifested by his fellow-citizens of various political parties, to place him in nomination as a candidate for president of the republic. His official despatches and private letters confirmed the favorable opinion generally entertained respecting his ability to fill the highest station with credit to himself and benefit to the nation—and the excellence of his private character, as well as his sterling good sense, was acknowledged by all. Although his political opinions were known to coincide with those of the whig party, he had never taken an active part in political contests; many of the democratic party, therefore, avowed their determination to support him as a candidate for the presidency, but the leaders of that party refused to acknowledge his claims. A large portion of the whig party, particularly in the southern and southwestern states, early saw in the popularity attached to his name, the great probability of success in the presidential election if he could be made the candidate of the party, and consequently used every effort to effect such a result. The attention, also, of citizens in several of the states, organized as the native American party, was turned toward General Taylor as a candidate for the presidency immediately after his brilliant victories on the Rio Grande and in Mexico. One of the earliest meetings of the people in favor of his nomination for president, was held at Trenton, New Jersey, on the 11th of June, 1846; this was followed by a similar meeting in the city of New York, on the 18th of the same month. Both of these meetings were called without distinction of party, soon after the reception of the news of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma.

Taylor's nomination for the presidency was proposed to him by one of the native American party, in March, 1847. While he did not positively refuse to allow his name to be used in that connexion, he stated in reply, April 28, 1847, that he could not, while the country was involved in war, and while his duty called him to take part in the operations against the enemy, acknowledge any ambition beyond that of bestowing all his best exertions toward obtaining an adjustment of our difficulties with Mexico. Subsequently he expressed a willingness to become a candidate for the presidency, provided that the call came from the spontaneous action and free will of the nation at large, and void of the slightest agency of his own.

The following letters, respecting his nomination and his political principles, give his views on those points.

"BATON ROUGE, LA., *January* 30, 1848.

"SIR: Your communication of the 15th instant has been received, and the suggestions therein offered duly considered.

"In reply to your inquiries, I have again to repeat, that I have neither the power nor the desire to dictate to the American people the exact manner in which they should proceed to nominate for the presidency of the United States. If they desire such a result, they must adopt the means best suited, in their opinion, to the consummation of the purpose; and if they think fit to bring me before them for this office, through their legislatures, mass meetings, or conventions, I can not object to their designating these bodies as whig, democrat, or native. But in being thus nominated, I must insist on the condition—and my position on this point is immutable—that I shall not be brought forward by them as the candidate of their party, or considered as the exponent of their party doctrines.

"In conclusion, I have to repeat, that if I were nominated for the presidency, by any body of my fellow-citizens, designated by any name they might choose to adopt, I should esteem it an honor, and would accept such nomination, provided it had been made entirely independent of party considerations.

"I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, "Z. TAYLOR.
"PETER SKEN SMITH, Esq., Philadelphia."

"BATON ROUGE, *April* 22, 1848.

"DEAR SIR: My opinions have been so often misconceived and misrepresented, that I deem it due to myself, if not to my friends, to make a brief exposition of them upon the topics to which you have called my attention.

"I have consented to the use of my name as a candidate for the presidency. I have frankly avowed my own distrust of my fitness for this high station; but having, at the solicitation of many of my countrymen, taken my position as a candidate, I do not feel at liberty to surrender that position until my friends manifest a wish that I should retire from it. I will then most gladly do so. I have no private purposes to accomplish, no party projects to build up, no enemies to punish—nothing to serve but my country.

"I have been very often addressed by letter, and my opinions have been asked upon almost every question that might occur to the writers as affecting the interest of their country or their party. I have not always responded to these inquiries, for various reasons.

"I confess, while I have great cardinal principles which will regulate my political life, I am not sufficiently familiar with all the minute details of political legislation to give solemn pledges to exert myself to carry out this or defeat that measure. I have no concealment. I hold no opinion which I would not readily proclaim to my assembled countrymen; but crude impressions upon matters of policy, which may be right to-day and wrong to-morrow, are perhaps not the best test of fitness for office. One who can not be trusted without pledges, can not be confided in merely on account of them.

"I will proceed, however, now to respond to your inquiries:—

"1. I reiterate what I have so often said: I am a whig. If elected, I would not be the mere president of a party. I would endeavor to act independent of party domination. I should feel bound to administer the government untrammelled by party schemes.

"2. THE VETO POWER.—The power given by the constitution to the executive to interpose his veto, is a high conservative power; but, in my opinion, should never be exercised except in cases of clear violation of the constitution, or manifest haste and want of consideration by Congress. Indeed, I have thought that for many years past the known opinions and wishes of the executive have exercised undue and injurious influence upon the legislative department of the government; and for this cause I have thought our system was in danger of undergoing a great change from its true theory. The personal opinions of the individual who may happen to occupy the executive chair, ought not to control the action of Congress upon questions of domestic policy; nor ought his objections to be interposed where questions of constitutional power have been settled by the various departments of government, and acquiesced in by the people.

"3. Upon the subject of the tariff, the currency, the improvement of our great highways, rivers, lakes, and harbors, the will of the people, as expressed through their representatives in Congress, ought to be respected and carried out by the executive.

"4. THE MEXICAN WAR.—I sincerely rejoice at the prospect of peace. My life has been devoted to arms, yet I look upon war at all times and under all circumstances as a national calamity, to be avoided if compatible with the national honor. The principles of our government, as well as its true policy, are opposed to the subjugation of other nations and the dismemberment of other countries by conquest. In the language of the great Washington, 'Why should we quit our own to stand on foreign ground?' In the Mexican war our national honor has been vindicated; and in dictating terms of peace, we may well afford to be forbearing and even magnanimous to a fallen foe.

"These are my opinions upon the subjects referred to by you, and any reports or publications, written or verbal, from any source, differing in any essential particular from what is here written, are unauthorized and untrue.

"I do not know that I shall again write upon the subject of national politics. I shall engage in no schemes, no combinations, no intrigues. If the American people have not confidence in me, they ought not to give me their suffrages. If they do not, you know me well enough to believe me, when I declare I shall be content. I am too old a soldier to murmur against such high authority. "Z. TAYLOR.

"To Captain J. S. ALLISON."

With the knowledge of General Taylor's political opinions repeatedly expressed in the above and other answers to inquiries made of him, his name was prominently brought before the whig national convention which met at Philadelphia on the 1st of June, 1848.

The first ballot taken in that convention showed the popularity of General Taylor, even in comparison with his distinguished rivals as candidates for the presidency. The votes stood for Zachary Taylor, 111; Henry Clay, 97; Winfield Scott, 43; Daniel Webster, 22; John M. Clayton, 4; John M'Lean, 2. Necessary for a choice, 140; the whole number of votes being 279.

On the second ballot the vote stood for Taylor, 118, Clay, 86; Scott, 49; Webster, 22; Clayton, 4. Third ballot, Taylor, 133; Clay, 74; Scott, 54; Webster, 17; Clayton, 1.

The fourth and final ballot gave Taylor 171; Clay, 35; Scott, 60; Webster, 14. It is worthy of notice, that the votes for General Taylor on the last ballot came from each of the thirty states represented in the convention; thus showing that he was truly a national candidate.

General Taylor was then declared duly nominated as the whig candidate for the presidency of the United States. Millard Fillmore, of the state of New York, was, on the second ballot, nominated by the same convention for vice-president.

Having duly accepted the nomination of the whig national convention, General Taylor remained with his family at Baton Rouge until the presidential election took place, in November, 1848. The result of that election, as shown by the votes of the people, and confirmed of course by the electoral colleges then chosen, which met in December following, was the election of Taylor and Fillmore, the whig candidates for president and vice-president, who each received 163 electoral votes, against 127 votes given for the democratic candidates, General Cass and General Butler.

The distinguishing traits of General Taylor's character, as described by a friend, are honesty, good judgment, benevolence, firmness, and energy. It were a waste of time to dwell upon these traits of his character, for his military career has afforded such abundant examples of his exercise of these qualities as to render them familiar to every one who has heard or read of the man. The following extracts from Taylor's official despatches at different periods of his life, are characteristic of his determination and unsurpassed bravery.

In his letter to General Howard, giving the details of his expedition against the British and Indians on Red river in September, 1814, he says: —

"I collected the officers together and put the following question to them: 'Are we able, 334 effective men, to fight the enemy with any prospect of success?' They were of opinion the enemy was *at least three to one*, and that it was not practicable to effect the object. I then determined to drop down the river and erect a fort; and should the enemy attempt to descend the river in force before the fort can be completed, *every foot of the way from the fort to the settlements shall be contested.*"

In his letter to the adjutant-general of the army, dated Point Isabel, May 7, 1846 (more than thirty years after the above), he uses similar language, viz.:—

"I shall march this day, with the main body of the army, to open a communication with Major Brown, and to throw forward supplies of ordnance and provisions. *If the enemy opposes my march, in whatever force, I shall fight him.*"

In person, General Taylor is about five feet eight inches in height, and slightly inclined to corpulency. His complexion is dark, his forehead high, and his eyes keen and penetrating, indicating uniform good humor, his face careworn, but extremely intelligent, and generally lit up with a benevolent smile. He dresses at all times with great simplicity, and is kind and affable in his manners. He has been but once married, and has had four children — one son and three daughters. Of the latter, one married Dr. Wood, of the U. S. army; another (since deceased) married Colonel Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, who commanded the Mississippi volunteers at Buena Vista; the third married Colonel W. W. S. Bliss, of the army, who, as before mentioned, accompanied the general in his campaigns in Mexico. Colonel Bliss and lady reside with the president.

On the 24th of January, General Taylor took his departure for Washington, to enter upon the duties of the high office to which he had been elected by the suffrages of the people. On the day previous to his taking leave of his home and his immediate friends and neighbors, the citizens of Baton Rouge, without distinction of party, assembled spontaneously, to pay him their respects and bid him farewell. A large procession was formed, which proceeded to his residence where he was appropriately addressed on behalf of the citizens, by one of their number. To this address he made a brief but touching reply, in which he assured them that it was with feelings of no ordinary character, that he met with his fellow-citizens on such an occasion, many of whom he had been associated with more than a quarter of a century. Had he consulted his own wishes, he said he should have preferred the office he was then about to vacate, and have remained among his old friends ; but that as the people had, without his solicitation, seen fit to elevate him to another station, though he distrusted his abilities satisfactorily to discharge the great and important duties thus imposed upon him, yet he assured them that he should endeavor to fulfil them without regard to fear, favor, or affection from any one. In conclusion with his prayers for the welfare of his fellow-citizens of Baton Rouge, he bade them an affectionate farewell.

The day succeeding General Taylor's departure, Colonel Bliss, assistant adjutant-general, issued an order announcing the resignation of the general, and his final withdrawal from the military service of the army. In resigning his commission, General Taylor expressed his "regret at his separation from a service to which he was attached by so many pleasing and proud associations. To the officers and men who had served under his immediate orders, he expressed his hearty thanks for their zealous and cordial support in the execution of the duties confided to him during a long and eventful service. To them and to all he extended a heartfelt farewell, and his warmest wishes for their continued happiness and success in the arduous and honorable career which they had chosen." Thus terminated Taylor's connexion with the army, after a service of more than forty years.

On his journey to Washington, by way of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, the Cumberland road, and the Baltimore and Ohio railroad. the president elect was met with the liveliest expressions of gratitude and respect by the people in the different places along his route. After a long and fatiguing journey, interrupted by the public demonstrations in the various cities and towns through which he passed, he arrived at Washington, on the evening of the 23d of February, the anniversary of the battle of Buena Vista — and was received with every demonstration of joy by the citizens and others assembled at the national capital. From the relay house, on the railroad, about thirty miles from Washington, he was attended by the mayor and several members of the city council. The delay at the relay house, where he was welcomed by deputations from Baltimore, caused his arrival at the metropolis after nightfall — but the stars shone brightly, and the railroad track was occasionally illuminated by bonfires on the route. By the roaring of cannon and flights of brilliant rockets was the general heralded into the city, and escorted by a large concourse of people to his quarters at Willard's hotel, on Pennsylvania avenue, where he remained until the day of his inauguration.

The joint committee of the senate and house of representatives appointed to wait on the president and vice-president elect and inform them of their election to those high offices, having accordingly waited on General Taylor, after his arrival at the seat of government, and through their chairman, Colonel Jefferson Davis of Mississippi (his son-in-law), performed that duty; "the president elect, in signifying his acceptance of the office to which he had been chosen by the people, evinced emotions of the profoundest gratitude, and acknowledged his distrust of his ability to fulfil the expectations upon which their confidence was based, but gave assurances of a fixed purpose to administer the government for the benefit and advantage of the whole country.

"In alluding to the fact to which his attention had been drawn, that the chairman of the committee represented a public body, a majority of whom were opposed in political opinion to the president elect, and accorded with that majority, he recognised in it the deference to the popular will constitutionally expressed, on which rests the strength and hope of the republic, and he said that it was to have been expected from the senate of the United States.

"He expressed an ardent wish that he might be able in any degree to assuage the fierceness of party, or temper with moderation the conflicts of those who are only divided as to the means of securing the public welfare.

"He said, having been reminded that he was about to occupy the chair once filled by Washington, that he could hope to emulate him only in the singleness of the aims which guided the conduct of the man who had no parallel in history, and no rival in the hearts of his countrymen.

"In conclusion, he announced his readiness to take the oath of office on the 5th of March, proximo, at such hour and place as might be designated."

The report of the committee being made to the senate on the 27th of February, that body appointed as a committee to make the necessary arrangements for the reception of the president elect on the 5th of March, Senators Reverdy Johnson, Jefferson Davis, and John Davis.

In the full tide of a well-earned popularity, and with the best wishes of all parties, General Taylor commenced his career as chief magistrate of the republic. Immediately after his inauguration, on the 5th of March, 1849, he familiarly received at the presidential mansion all classes of his fellow-citizens, who thronged to welcome his advent at the capital, and to assure him of the public confidence in intrusting to him the affairs of state which devolved upon him. With becoming diffidence, in consequence of his want of experience as a civilian, he devoted himself with assiduity to the duties of his new station, and rapidly made himself acquainted with public men and the measures required of him as the head of the nation, and the director of its destinies.

After the first labors attendant upon the organization of his administration were over, the president made a tour, during the summer of 1819 through the middle states, as far west as Lake Erie, when, in consequence of ill health, from which he soon after recovered, he returned to Washington, passing through the interior of the state of New York, and the cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. He was everywhere received by the people with enthusiasm and favor.

Resuming his duties at the seat of government, President Taylor met with firmness the many difficulties which embarrassed his administration, and continued to enjoy the confidence of his countrymen in the midst of the agitating questions which distracted Congress during a long and arduous session.

In the height of his usefulness, and while he was generally relied on as being eminently fitted, from his position and character, to calm dissension, and restore domestic peace to the Union, General Taylor was seized with an alarming illness, which, assuming the form of a bilious fever, in five days terminated his existence, at the presidential mansion, in the city of Washington, on Tuesday, the 9th of July, 1850, in the 66th year of his age.

General Taylor was attended in his last moments by his wife and other members of his family, including Colonel Bliss and lady, Colonel Taylor and family, Jefferson Davis and family; also by Vice-President Fillmore, several senators and members of the house of representatives, gentlemen of the diplomatic corps, and a number of intimate friends. The medical having yielded to the spiritual agent, whose office it was to prepare for the approach of the king of terrors, prayers were said, after which the dying president took leave of his family. His last audible words were, "I am about to die — I expect the summons soon — I have endeavored to discharge all my official duties faithfully — I regret nothing, but am sorry that I am about to leave my friends."

The funeral of President Taylor took place at Washington, on Saturday, the 13th of July; and was attended by the members of both houses of Congress, President Fillmore, the cabinet and other officers of the general government, with a vast concourse of citizens and strangers. The pageant exceeded everything of the kind in order and magnificence, that ever took place in the metropolis.

General Taylor had discharged the duties of president one year, four months, and four days; and his sudden and unexpected death overwhelmed with sorrow his countrymen throughout the Union. Public honors were paid to his memory by both houses of Congress, then in session, by the army and navy, by state, municipal, and other authorities, and by religious and other societies; and, in short, every demonstration of respect and sorrow was evinced by the people of the whole country for the great loss which the nation had sustained.

In the language of one of the journals of the day, "General Taylor had endeared himself to the American people to a degree which few public men ever obtain. The cause of this lay in the great goodness of his heart, the exceeding sincerity of his character; in his transparent common sense, so broad and strong as to amount to wisdom; in a firmness that faced every danger and shunned no responsibility; and in a patriotism and sense of honor which threw an almost chivalrous halo over the sturdy elements of his nature. Not a statesman by genius or by habit, he brought to the presidency a sound practical judgment which often proved more reliable than the opinions of those long versed in political affairs. He felt as the president of the American people, and instinctively apprehended the destiny of the republic. Not endowed with uncommon powers of reflection, he penetrated the questions brought before him as by a spontaneous faculty of insight, and having once made up his mind, did not abandon his determination. He was eminently a man of the people; he took them by the hand; he shared in their joys and their sorrows; not for any ulterior purpose, not as one descending for the moment from an eminent position, but because he felt himself foreign to no human interest or emotion. A triumphant general, elected to the presidency without effort on his part, he never forgot that admirable native modesty which forbade him to exaggerate the value of his own services and talents, or to claim any gift or capacity which he was not fully conscious of possessing. With manners of great plainness, destitute of polish, he always conveyed the impression of a true gentleman. But in every respect General Taylor was an American. He was a son of this republic; whatever he was, he was a product of his country and her institutions, and of the names of her great and good men, few will longer be preserved than his."

ADMINISTRATION OF TAYLOR.

At the appointed time, Monday, March 5, 1849, the inauguration of General Zachary Taylor as president of the United States, took place, in front of the great portico of the capitol. The multitude of people assembled on the occasion from every part of the Union, for the purpose of witnessing the interesting ceremony, is supposed to have been much larger than was ever before collected in Washington. The weather, although the sky was clouded, was as pleasant as usual at this season of the year. At the break of day the strains of martial music resounded along the principal avenues of the city, and hundreds of national flags were unfolded to the breeze. The bells of the city then rang a stirring peal, and long before the usual hour of breakfast, the people were wending their way in immense masses to the capitol.

At nine o'clock, one hundred citizens who officiated as marshals on horseback, proceeded in a body to Willard's hotel, for the purpose of paying their respects to General Taylor. After the ceremony of introduction, the marshals retired to attend to their official duties, and the president elect, who was dressed in a plain suit of black, and in the enjoyment of his usual good health, returned to his apartments to prepare for the procession.

At half past eleven o'clock, the procession took up its line of march from the hotel to the capitol. The military of Washington, Baltimore, &c., who formed part of the procession, presented an imposing appearance. The carriage containing the president elect was drawn by four gray horses. Ex-President Polk, Mr. Speaker Winthrop, and Mr. Seaton, mayor of Washington, accompanied General Taylor in the carriage. Pennsylvania avenue, along which the procession passed, was thronged with thousands of people; many of the roofs of the houses were also covered, and every window was occupied by spectators. The time occupied by the procession in reaching the east front of the capitol was about an hour; and after the conclusion of the inaugural ceremonies, the booming of artillery resounded through the city.

The senate being convened at eleven o'clock, after prayer by the chaplain, the Hon. David R. Atchison, of Missouri, was chosen president *pro* *tem.* The diplomatic corps, representing various foreign nations, were next announced. The brilliancy of some of their costumes appeared in fine contrast with the dark robes of the judges of the supreme court, seated opposite to them.

The late vice-president, Mr. Dallas, then conducted to the chair the Hon. Millard Fillmore, the vice-president elect, to whom the oath of office was administered by Mr. Atchison, after which Mr. Fillmore delivered, with calmness and dignity, an appropriate address, and took his seat as president of the senate.

At twelve o'clock, the members of the late executive cabinet appeared, and occupied places on the left of the vice-president.

All things were now in readiness for the appearance of the president elect, who, after an interval, entered the senate-chamber in company with Ex-President Polk, and took a seat which had been prepared for him; Mr. Polk occupying another upon his left hand.

After a brief pause the order of procession was announced, and the company retired from the chamber of the senate in the order prescribed, to the east portico of the capitol, where an extensive staging had been erected. At about one o'clock, the president elect, in full view of at least twenty thousand people from all parts of the Union, pronounced his inaugural address. It was delivered in a remarkably distinct voice, and many parts of it were enunciated with a full and clear emphasis, and enthusiastically responded to by the cheers of the surrounding spectators As soon as the applause which marked the conclusion of the address had subsided, the oath of office was administered to the president by Chief-Justice Taney. The president then received congratulations from numerous persons present, Chief-Justice Taney and Ex-President Polk taking the lead.

The ceremonies at the capitol were terminated by salvos of artillery, and the president and the procession returned down the avenue leading from the capitol to the White-House, appropriated to the residence of the successive presidents of the United States. At this mansion the president received with his accustomed courtesy the salutes of some thousands of his fellow-citizens, and in the evening visited several balls given in honor of the occasion.

On the 6th of March, the president nominated to the senate the following gentlemen to compose his cabinet, and they were, the following day, confirmed by that body, viz.: John M. Clayton, of Delaware, secretary of state; William M. Meredith, of Pennsylvania, secretary of the treasury; George W. Crawford, of Georgia, secretary of war; William B. Preston, of Virginia, secretary of the navy; Thomas Ewing, of Ohio, secretary of the interior; Jacob Collamer, of Vermont, postmaster-general; Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, attorney-general.

These officers, with the exception of Mr. Crawford, who arrived from

Georgia a few days afterward, respectively took the oath of office and entered upon their duties on the 8th of March, 1849.

The home department, first organized under the administration of General Taylor, was a new branch of the government, created at the close of the last session of Congress under Mr. Polk's administration, and added another member to the president's cabinet. The head of the department is called the secretary of the interior, a term taken from the title of a similar functionary in the cabinet of the government of France. The act creating this new department, places under the supervision of the secretary of the interior, the bureau of the commissioner of patents ; the general land office ; the accounts of marshals, clerks, and other officers of the courts of law ; the bureau of Indian affairs ; the pension-office ; the patent-office ; the census-office ; the commissioner of public buildings ; and the board of inspectors and warden of the penitentiary of the District of Columbia. The bill was reported in the house of representatives by Mr. Vinton, of Ohio, from the committee of ways and means, in the 30th Congress, and, after it had been stated to the house that it was essentially the plan of the then secretary of the treasury, Mr. Walker, whose department was overburdened with business, and no better plan could be devised, it passed the house in February, 1849, being engrossed by a vote of 111 to 76. The senate took it up on the last afternoon of the session. Senator Allen, of Ohio, said it would be followed up next session by another bill for another hundred clerks. Mr. Webster heartily approved of it; the government had outgrown the means of performing its duties ; the business was fast increasing; he did not know of a single clerkship that could be considered a sinecure. Mr. Niles, of Connecticut, considered the measure an improper enlargement of executive power and patronage. Mr. Mason, of Virginia, said: "You create fifty new offices where you diminish one. We progress in these respects, but we never go back." Mr. Calhoun, of South Carolina, called the measure monstrous and ominous, tending to the consolidation and concentration of power. Many hours of debate, marked by real ability, with six records of yeas and nays, ended in the passage of the bill, 31 to 25, late in the evening of the 3d of March, 1849. The home department was the first new branch of the cabinet which had been created since 1798, when the navy department was organized, under the administration of John Adams. The postmaster-general was not considered a member of the cabinet until the administration of General Jackson, although the department of the general post-office was organized under Washington's administration, in 1789.

At the extra session of the senate on the 5th of March, 1849, the president *pro tem.*, Mr. Atchison, of Missouri, being in the chair, the senators elect were requested to advance to the chair and take the oath prescribed for them, when fourteen senators, whose term commenced on the 4th inst., were qualified and took their seats. When the name of the Hon. James

Shields, of Illinois, was called, Mr. Walker of Wisconsin, rose and submitted a resolution to refer the credentials of Mr. Shields to the committee on the judiciary, with instructions to inquire into his eligibility. Mr. Berrien moved that, in order that the proceedings of the day might not be interfered with (the inauguration of the president) by the discussion to which that resolution might lead, its further consideration should be postponed till the following day; to which course Mr. Walker assented. On the 6th of March, two other senators elect having been qualified and taken their seats, the colleague of Mr. Shields, Mr. Douglass, asked, on behalf of the state of Illinois, that the oath might be administered to Mr. Shields. His credentials, he said, were in due form, and therefore those credentials entitled him to a seat in the senate upon precisely the same grounds as the senators who were admitted to their seats. The senate, he said, had no jurisdiction over Mr. Shields or the matter until he was admitted to his seat as one of its members. Mr. Douglass then adduced as precedents the cases of Mr. Gallatin and others, in which the parties had been sworn in, and the question of ineligibility discussed after they had taken their seats. Mr. Webster, Mr. Mangum, and other senators, thought the proper course to be adopted was to allow Mr. Shields to be sworn in at once. After some discussion this was agreed to; General Shields was then qualified and took his seat. On the 7th of March, Messrs. Benton, Felch, Mason, Webster, and Pearce, were appointed to inquire into his eligibility, and on the 13th they reported, through Mr. Mason, of Virginia, that James Shields had been elected by the state of Illinois on the 13th of January, 1849; that he had admitted that he was by birth an alien; that he was naturalized October 21, 1840; and that his election was void, as he lacked several months of being a citizen for nine years. The oath of General Shields, when naturalized, October 21, 1840, stated that he was born in Tyrone county, Ireland, May 17, 1810; came to the United States when a minor; and had resided in this country since he was 18 years old. The committee reported the following resolution: "That the election of James Shields to be a senator of the United States was void, he not having been a citizen of the United States the term of years required as a qualification to be a senator of the United States."

On the question being stated, viz., on the adoption of the resolution, General Shields rose and remarked, that there was no competitor to contest his seat; no memorial questioning his right to a seat in the senate. He had resided in Illinois 17 years; been a member of the legislature, an auditor, a judge of the supreme court of that state, commissioner of the general land-office, a general in the United States army, and even, for three days, governor of Oregon — offices requiring naturalization. The senator from Wisconsin (Mr. Walker), however, had a perfect right to do what no citizen of Illinois would have done; and he did not complain of the conduct of Mr. Walker. Perhaps it was his duty to do so. But the question having been referred to an honorable, a talented, and an influential committee, General Shields said, he had made up his mind to remain entirely passive, to let the matter take its course, to submit to the decision of the senate, and to appeal to his own state. If she deserted him, he said, it was his intention (though he had endeavored to prove his fidelity to his country by every act of his life) never to offer himself again for office in the United States.

Mr. Mason said the committee were guided by the action of the senate in Mr. Gallatin's case. Gallatin was born in Geneva, Switzerland, 1761; emigrated to the United States in 1780; took the oath of allegiance to the state of Virginia in 1785; was elected to the senate from Pennsylvania in 1793: his seat was contested in 1794; and his election was declared void by a vote of 14 to 12 in the senate — because he had not been nine years a citizen.

Mr. Foote having moved the postponement of the question until the first Monday in December next, a long and interesting discussion took place, Mr. Douglass contending that the resolution of the committee had been based upon a wrong construction of the constitution. Mr. Webster held that the election was void, because the person upon whom the election fell was not competent to discharge the functions of the office that was intended to be conferred upon him; that is to say, to be a senator from the 3d of March, 1849, for six years. Now, if he could not be a senator from the 3d of March for six years, then he was not eligible for the senatorial term; and it might just as well be said that he might be elected when he had been a citizen six years, and await the lapse of three years before commencing his period of service, as it may be said that he may be elected and await the lapse of nine months. That proposition he considered so clear as to satisfy any gentleman on reflection. Mr. Calhoun said that nothing could be more certain than that if General Shields were not then a senator he could not become such by postponement. Mr. Calhoun said he should feel bound to vote for the resolution properly amended. His opinion was, that the resolution was not entirely correct. It would seem to conclude that all cases of election are void unless nine years shall have expired on the day of the election. "I think," said Mr. Calhoun, "that is not according to the constitution. My opinion is, that if the nine years are consummated previous to the 4th of March, the election is good and is not void. I propose, therefore, to add to the resolution the following words: 'at the commencement of the term for which he was elected.'" Mr. Webster assented to this construction, and hoped the amendment would be adopted. General Shields asked permission of the senate to tender his resignation. After a lengthened and animated discussion on the question of receiving the resignation, Mr. Hale, of New Hampshire, moved that the chair be instructed to inform the executive of Illinois that General Shields had resigned his seat in the senate, which motion was postponed; the amendment of Mr. Calhoun to the resolution of the committee was adopted, and the senate refused, by a vote of 32 to 12, to adopt a motion made by Mr. Douglass, of the same tenor as the one offered by Mr. Hale, namely, requesting the vice-president to notify the executive of Illinois that General Shields had resigned his seat. The question was then taken on the resolution as amended, and it was adopted without a division, on the 15th of March, and a copy of the resolution was directed to be certified by the secretary, and transmitted by the vice-president to the executive of Illinois.

Thus the seat of General Shields was declared vacant, and the governor of Illinois, believing he had no power to fill it, made no appointment, but called the legislature together, which body again elected General Shields a senator of the United States, the nine years probation having expired.

On the 12th of March, Mr. Webster offered a resolution, which was adopted, that the president be requested to transmit any instructions which may have been given to the United States minister in London, offering a further extension of reciprocity and equality in the laws of navigation.

In introducing in the senate the resolution referred to in the proceedings of the 12th of March, Mr. Webster said that he offered it in consequence of information received by the very latest arrival from England. In the advices by the last steamer at Halifax, and transmitted by telegraph, it was stated that the president of the board of trade in England "had again brought forward the government proposal for the modification of the navigation laws; and Mr. Bancroft, the United States minister, had stated, that to whatever extent in liberality the British parliament may be disposed to legislate in this matter, he is ready and willing to sign a convention immediately, based upon the most complete reciprocity, so as to open the entire coasting trade of the two countries to the vessels of both nations." Mr. Webster said his object for the present was only an inquiry. If it were the pleasure of the senate to adopt the resolution, it might be answered before they finally adjourned. But if there were not an opportunity to receive an answer during the session of the senate, one part of his purpose would, at least, be accomplished, that of drawing the attention of the country to this most important subject. He confessed that he was a little startled to find that the American minister now remaining in England, had, at the present moment, and under existing circumstances, offered to throw open the whole coasting trade of the United States freely, and without discrimination, to British vessels.

If we enter into this reciprocity with Great Britain, and open to her the whole coasting trade of the United States, we are bound, of course, to do the same thing to the ports of the north of Europe. It would be well for us to consider the experience we have had, since we opened the trade between ourselves and certain powers of Europe and America to the ships and vessels of third parties. And it will become us to see how far the interference of ships and vessels of the northern part of Europe, for example, in the trade between the United States and Brazil, has lessened or increased the interests of ships owned in the United States, and all those concerned in navigation.

The coasting trade proper, Mr. Webster said, between England and her European dominions, was infinitely small, compared with the coasting trade of the United States. The coasting trade of the latter employs the greater part of the tonnage of the United States; and that trade, as it is, and is to be hereafter, will employ our shipping in voyages, some of which will be the longest prosecuted on the globe. They will be voyages from the Atlantic cities, around Cape Horn, to Oregon and California. If any proposition, as it seems has been suggested, should be adopted by the government of the United States, it would follow that all the products or manufactures of the United States might be carried in British or other foreign ships from Boston or New York, not only to New Orleans, but round the cape to our own ports on the Pacific, as freely as they might be carried in our own vessels. His object was merely to ascertain whether it was true that our minister to England had been authorized to enter into a convention which would uproot, substantially, the principles of our navigation laws as they have existed for sixty years. The subject well deserved the attention of the country.

After the transaction of the executive business of nominations to office before them, the senate adjourned on the 21st of March.

On the 12th of March, President Taylor, surrounded by his constitutional advisers, received the salutations of the representatives of foreign governments at Washington, on the occasion of his accession to the chief magistracy. The whole number of the members of foreign legations present was thirty-two, all in their official costumes.

The address on behalf of the diplomatic corps, was delivered by the oldest member of that corps present, General Don Carlos Maria De Alvear, minister plenipotentiary and extraordinary of the Argentine confederation, in the following terms: —

"Mr. President: The diplomatic corps accredited to the government of the United States, has the honor, through me, to express to you, the chief magistrate of this republic, their sincere congratulations on your recent election to the presidency, which, they are profoundly convinced, will redound to the honor and happiness of the great people over whom you have been called to preside; and that those relations of peace and friendly intercourse which now so happily exist between the United States and the various countries which we have the honor to represent, will be preserved and perpetuated, to the mutual advantage and well being of all. And you may be well assured, sir, that nothing shall be wanting on our part to contribute to so desirable a result. We take advantage of this occasion, Mr. President, to express to you our most cordial wishes for your health and happiness."

To which address the president replied: "GENTLEMEN: I accept, with lively satisfaction, the congratulations which you have been pleased to tender to me upon this occasion. You may be assured that it shall be my undeviating endeavor to cultivate with the nations which you respectively represent, the most cordial relations of amity and good will. In this I shall be guided by the cardinal policy of this government, and, I doubt not, cheered by your kind and zealous co-operation.

"Permit me also to offer to you, individually, my best wishes for your welfare."

The president was then presented individually to the gentlemen composing the corps, exchanging salutations with them in his usual cordial manner.

On Monday, March 19th, at three o'clock, P. M., M. Bodisco, the minister from the emperor of Russia to the president of the United States, with his two secretaries — not having been able to attend at the general reception of the diplomatic corps — was received by the president, to whom he made the following address: —

"MR. PRESIDENT: Remarkable military deeds, accomplished amid difficulties, and enhanced by great modesty, have brought to the knowledge of the American people your high qualifications. Your energy and your wisdom have been deservedly appreciated, and magnificently rewarded, by the supreme magistracy to which the choice of a great nations has elevated you. The conservative principles you have proclaimed, and the assurances you have given, will be everywhere accepted as pledges of peace; and all interested in the welfare of the Union must sincerely wish that the success of your administration should completely correspond to your good intentions and devotion to your country.

"The emperor, my august master, taking a permanent interest in the welfare of the United States, has learned, with great satisfaction, that the national decision has called to the presidency a citizen so distinguished for his eminent qualities and his great integrity.

"The firm and honorable policy of the emperor, the benevolence and purity of his intentions, give great facilities to his ministers, in their relations with the governments to which they are accredited. I am, Mr President, highly gratified to be able to add, that my official intercourse has always been perfectly satisfactory. The successive administrations, during the time of my residence in Washington, have uniformly shown me the kindest dispositions, and I have constantly found that they were equally anxious to insure the continuation of the excellent relations so happily existing between Russia and the United States. I am convinced, Mr. President, that those friendly relations will receive a stronger impulse under your auspices; and you will permit me to assure you that I really wish to render myself worthy of your confidence."

The president responded in the following terms.—

"SIR: The desire which you have expressed, to render yourself worthy of the confidence of this government, can not fail to be realized, if your future career shall correspond to your past conduct. During the long period for which you have been accredited at Washington, you have formed ties and associations in our country which have given you an interest in its continued and increasing prosperity; and you have secured the friendship and affection of the social circles in this district, while the confidence of your august sovereign has been the merited reward of your fidelity to the true honor and interests of Russia. It shall be my study to cultivate and strengthen the friendly relations between the United States and Russia—relations which have hitherto been cemented by mutual good offices, and which I hope may ever remain unimpaired. It requires no prophetic eye to discern that a mutually-beneficial intercourse is destined, and perhaps speedily, to arise between the territories of our respective nations, which border on the Pacific.

"Thanking you, sir, for the kind allusions you have been pleased to make touching myself personally, I welcome you most cordially, as a gentleman with whom official relations will be made agreeable by the courtesy of his deportment, and as the representative of a great nation, on terms of the most friendly intercourse with my country."

Among the earliest subjects which required the attention of the new administration, was the consideration of applications for office, which were numerous and urgent from the adherents of the successful party, from various parts of the Union. Although a general removal of persons appointed to office under the administration of Mr. Polk was not immediately resolved upon, yet the president and cabinet perceived that a very general change was expected, not only in the appointments of ministers and consuls to foreign countries, and other important offices in the domestic relations of the country, but in the minor and less responsible offices connected with the different departments of the government, including those under the control of the postmaster-general. To relieve the president from the labor, care, and embarrassments of personal applications to him for office, as had been practised under democratic administrations, it was determined by General Taylor and his cabinet, that all applications for office should be referred to the departments to which they respectively belonged, and after being considered by the head of such department, that the decision on the subject should be made at a meeting of the president and cabinet—after which the nomination should be made by the president, if during the recess, and the commission issued; the person so appointed then to enter on his duties, until the final action of the senate on his nomination took place.

Under these circumstances, numerous appointments to office were made by the president and cabinet, during the recess of the senate, and were very generally confirmed by that body at the next meeting of Congress, although much dissatisfaction was felt by the democratic party, and expressed by the newspaper presses opposed to the administration. It was argued, that General Taylor having avowed his independence of party connections on his nomination to the presidency, he had consequently received a large democratic support at the election, and that it was not, therefore, generally expected by the people that an entire removal of democrats holding office under the general government should take place. A different construction of the president's position, however, was made by the cabinet and the whig press; they claimed that General Taylor was elected as a whig, and that the people had given him full power by the election to sustain his administration by the appointment of his friends to office. Removals and appointments, therefore, continued to be made from time to time, although the change was not complete, many democrats being suffered to remain in office, particularly in those of minor consideration.

It soon became evident that whatever course the administration of General Taylor might pursue with regard to appointments to office, it would not be sustained by a majority in the national legislature. The senate, at its meeting on the 5th of March, to act on executive business, was ascertained to have a decided majority against the administration, and notwithstanding the favorable indications at the elections of members of the house of representatives, in 1848, and previous to the presidential election, the representatives elected to the 31st Congress after the accession of General Taylor to the presidency, during the year 1849, showed the probability of an opposition majority in the house, when they should assemble in December of that year.

There were various causes which operated to prevent the administration from being sustained by a majority in Congress. In the first place, the great personal popularity of General Taylor in consequence of his military achievements, and the great confidence felt in his character for integrity, it was evident, could not be extended to other persons with whom he was politically connected. Secondly, there were but few points of difference between the two great parties of whigs and democrats sufficiently distinct to animate and call out the voters in full force in the struggle for power. Various measures, once deemed important, had become obsolete ideas, and others were supported or opposed by men of both parties. Leaving out of view the dissatisfaction at first felt by many of the friends of Mr. Clay and other presidential candidates in 1848, at the nomination of General Taylor in preference to old and long-tried whigs, the elections for members of Congress showed that the people were not anxious to sustain the president by a majority of his political friends in the legislative branch of the government. It was also proved by the elections, that the appointments to office and other transactions of the cabinet had done nothing to strengthen their power and establish their influence and popularity. The president and his cabinet therefore found themselves, in a short time after their accession to power, in a novel and embarrassing position, and they awaited the ensuing meeting of Congress doubtless with much anxiety. Previous administrations had been sustained by a majority in Congress, but that of General Taylor seemed certain of encountering an opposition majority in the senate, while the house of representatives, composed of three distinct parties, had a doubtful aspect in advance. The third party was composed of those who were called "Free-Soilers," advocating the application of restrictions on slavery by the acts of Congress organizing new territories.

It seems appropriate in this place to offer a few remarks on appointments to office, by the general government, and in doing so we shall partially adopt the language of a writer in a leading political review. In every stage of its existence since the adoption of the federal constitution, in 1789, the American government has been sustained by political parties, and the measures adopted by successive administrations have generally been of a party character. We shall assume it to be a rule established and certain, that offices of political responsibility, or that carry with them a weight of political opinion, for the impeding or accomplishing the measure of the party in power, should be filled by men of that party. For the same reason that the majority of a state legislature will send only such a senator as will truly represent their opinion, it is necessary for a president to choose such persons to be members of his cabinet as will represent the opinion of the party. It were clearly an absurdity to do otherwise; it would be a defeating of the design of the constitution, which intends that the majority of opinion shall have its way. That offices of responsibility, or in other words, such offices as enable their incumbents to operate *ex officio* upon the opinion of the people, or to thwart or execute the laws, according to their pleasure or displeasure—that such offices should be filled by the appointment of members of the ruling party is, we think, most necessary; for if it is provided by the constitution that the majority should shape the conduct of the government, it is also provided, by necessity, that those only should be appointed to execute them, by whom we are most sure they will be fully and willingly executed. From this point of view it appears just, and even constitutional, that the entrance of a new party into power should be followed by an ejectment of all from office who were the originators, supporters, and executors, in a moral sense, of the measures of the displaced party. The important officers chosen by the people have been changed by the people, and the old incumbents ejected; and it is equally necessary that all important offices which carry with them a representative influence, bearing upon opinion, and the character of whose incumbents confirms or impairs, by official influence, the prevailing party, should be also ejected. Independently, therefore, of all theories of a rotation in office; of that political expediency which stimulates the canvasser with the hopes of office; independently, also, of all arguments that look to the effect of office-holding upon the characters of men; we hold it to be a necessity created by the nature of our government, that the change of rulers accomplished by the votes of the citizens should be followed by a change in the character of the government itself. That this change should be sufficiently, but not more than sufficiently, extended for the complete establishment of the party, and the accomplishment of all its measures, during the four years of its probation. What these offices may be, can be known only by experience. It might not seem, at first view, to be a matter of the least importance whether the cabinet should be of one mind on the leading questions of policy; and yet experience has shown that their unanimity on all impor tant measures is necessary for the efficient conduct of the government.

In a word, every office of political importance. or that confers a power to impede or favor the execution of the laws, or that has any executive responsibility to be exercised for or against the measures of the majority, must necessarily be filled by members of the prevailing party. The filling. of the elective offices with that party by the people, gives them a liberty of carrying out the popular will by filling appointments with the same. The purpose of the popular election was to give the supporters of a certain system of policy and economy a fair opportunity of trying it. The majority judged that it should be tried. But if the opinion of the majority prevails at all, it should prevail entire, or it is of no force. Half measures, or impeded measures — impeded by the personal opposition of members of the government, would not answer the end; when a party is in power, it must instate itself to the full, and rely upon the full efficacy of its policy to secure the favor of the nation, and not upon any compromises, or bribes to influential persons, who, in the end, would certainly thwart and traverse the measures of a government which they despise.

The foregoing argument, however, is not intended to be considered as making concessions to those who advocate a system of rotation in office. It is implied by the doctrine of rotation, that the office is created for the convenience and benefit of its incumbent, and not for that of the citizens at large. And because it were improper to favor one man more than another, therefore each man must at some time in his life enjoy an office.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that offices are in fact created for the benefit of those who hold them, in the nature of pensions and annuities; unless they are equally distributed among all, they are converted into the most odious of monopolies. Some persons look upon offices as they do upon pensions and annuities, as benefits created for those who hold them, and they very justly conclude that these benefits should be enjoyed in rotation; but when it is perceived that offices are not established for the benefit of their incumbents, the idea of a right to office, or a term in office, vanishes quite away. It is then only necessary to inquire by what system of appointments the performance of official duties will be best secured; the offices being established for the public benefit, and not for the convenience of office-loving citizens.

The president and cabinet, on coming into power, besides the subject of appointments to office, found many other matters claiming their prompt and earnest attention. The foreign relations of the United States were generally in a favorable position, but there were some diplomatic arrangements which are referred to in the first annual message of General Taylor, that received the consideration of the new administration, and such action as, in the judgment of the executive, was demanded by the various exigencies of the occasion. Congress having failed at the previous session to provide territorial governments for California and New Mexico, the president was left to act under the treaty with Mexico, by which those territories had been ceded to the United States, and both remaining under a military government placed in power by the late administration.

It was decided by the president not to disturb the arrangement made under his predecessor, Mr. Polk, and therefore he did not interfere with the powers of the military commandant in California, who continued to exercise the functions of civil governor as before. The president also sent the honorable Thomas Butler King, of Georgia, as bearer of despatches to California, and certain officers to California and New Mexico, whose duties were defined in letters of instruction from the executive, who also expressed his desire that each territory, if prepared to comply with the requisitions of the constitution of the United States, form a plan of a state constitution, and submit the same to Congress, with an application for admission into the Union as a state. A claim had been advanced by the state of Texas to a very large portion of the territory commonly designated by the name of New Mexico. The question of the boundary between these two sections of the country gradually assumed a serious aspect, as Texas insisted upon her right to extend her jurisdiction over a considerable portion of New Mexico, the inhabitants of which were unwilling to be separated from the territory to which they had always considered themselves as belonging. Nothing satisfactory, however, could be done by the national executive, but a military force was maintained in New Mexico, to preserve tranquillity until the boundary question could be settled by the action of Congress.

The new territory of Oregon was organized according to the act of Congress under the administration of Mr. Polk. A new governor and other officers, including Indian agencies, were appointed for that territory, by President Taylor, and measures were taken to complete the coast survey of Oregon and California, and the construction of lighthouses authorized by Congress on the former coast was commenced.

The great mineral wealth of California, particularly the abundance of gold found on the streams which water that territory, attracted to the shores of the Pacific large bodies of adventurers. The commercial importance of San Francisco and other ports of California soon became apparent, and imposed new duties on the government. The mines discovered being principally on the public lands belonging to the United States, geological and mineralogical surveys were made by the officers attached to the corps of engineers, and plans were devised by the government agents for the protection of persons engaged in mining, but it was evident that nothing effectual could be done in that way until a regular government was organized in the territory. A large proportion of the emigrants to California passed thither from the Atlantic states by sea around Cape Horn, or by the isthmus of Panama, or through Mexico, but large numbers of settlers from the western states, migrating to Oregon and California, made the journey over land, across the Rocky mountains. The latter required protection from the hostile Indians always to be found traversing the immense wilds of North America between the waters of the Mississippi valley and those flowing into the Pacific. To protect these emigrants and the greatly-extended frontier of the United States, required the constant attention of the government, and imposed new duties on the military department. Intense application to important business, therefore, was imposed upon the executive and his new cabinet, which was only interrupted on the part of the president by a visit during the summer of 1849, to the interior of Pennsylvania and New York. After a few weeks he returned, in feeble health, to his duties at Washington.

The first session of the 31st Congress commenced on Monday, the 3d of December, 1849, and continued until the 30th of September, 1850, a period of 302 days, or about ten months, being the longest and most exciting session which had been held since the organization of the government. The opposition to the administration had a decided majority in the senate as well as in the house of representatives, but in the latter body a part of the opposition consisted of "free-soil" men, principally democrats, who had been elected by that portion of the people who considered the restriction of slavery in the new territories as a paramount question. The free-soilers were few in number, but sufficient to hold the balance of power between the whigs and democrats in the house of representatives.

Precisely at the hour of twelve, meridian, the house was called to order by Thomas J. Campbell, clerk of the house of representatives of the 30th Congress. The roll having been called, it appeared that 223 members had answered to their names — the whole number of the house when full being 231. The published lists of the members elect divided them thus: whigs 105; democrats 112; free-soilers 13; and one vacancy in Massachusetts. The clerk having announced that a quorum was present, Mr. Boyd, of Kentucky, moved that the house do now proceed to the election of a speaker *viva voce.* No objection being made, and tellers being appointed by the clerk, the house proceeded to vote for speaker. The roll having been called in alphabetical order, the following was declared to be the result:—

Howell Cobb, of Georgia (democrat), 103; Robert C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts (whig), 96; David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania (free-soil democrat), 8; Meredith P. Gentry, of Tennessee (whig), 6; Horace Mann, of Massachusetts (free-soil whig), 2; Mr. Cleveland, of Connecticut (democrat), 1; Mr. Seddon, of Virginia (democrat), 1; Mr. Orr, of South Carolina (democrat), 1; Mr. Disney, of Ohio (democrat), 1; Mr. Root, of Ohio (free soil), 1; James Thompson, of Pennsylvania (democrat), 1: total number of votes 221—of which 111 were necessary to a choice. Mr. Cobb, opposition candidate, therefore fell short 8 votes, and the administration candidate, Mr. Winthrop, was 15 votes short, of an election There were 5 democrats, it will be perceived, who declined voting for the former, and 6 southern and 2 northern whigs who refused to vote for Mr. Winthrop, exclusive of the regular vote of the free-soilers. The 6 southern whigs refused to vote with their party for speaker without a distinct committal against the Wilmot proviso restricting slavery in the territories acquired from Mexico. This could not be conceded by the whigs, and Mr. Winthrop was steadily voted against by a few southern whigs on one side, and anti-slavery men elected by whig votes on the other, while the democrats were unable to concentrate the entire vote of their party on Mr. Cobb. Four unsuccessful attempts to elect a speaker took place the first day, when the house adjourned until the following day. A protracted contest then took place, parties continuing to vote nearly the same, as to candidates, for some days, when Mr. Cobb's name was withdrawn, and other candidates tried by the democrats without success; but finally, on the 11th of December, showing a disposition on the 39th vote to unite on Mr. William J. Brown, of Indiana. Mr. Brown having received 109 votes and Mr. Winthrop 101 (and there being 16 scattering votes), the latter gentleman thanked his friends cordially for their support, and withdrew his name as a candidate for speaker. On the following day, a coalition having been nearly completed between the democrats and free-soilers, Mr. Brown received on the fortieth vote 112 votes against 114 for other candidates, of whom no one received over 26 votes.

Mr. Stanly (whig), of North Carolina, then offered a resolution, that three democrats and three whigs be appointed to confer as to the choice of proper officers of the house. He made a few remarks on the subject, which were replied to by Mr. Bayly (democrat), who, among other remarks, observed, that "the bitter fruit which we are tasting is the legitimate fruit of the tree which the gentleman's party has planted and fostered." This he attributed to the doubtful position which the president elected by the whigs occupied in reference to an absorbing and exciting question of public policy, overriding all others, and sectional in its character—alluding to the subject of slavery, and the restrictions proposed to be imposed upon its extension into the new territories. The democratic party, Mr. Bayly said, certainly were not responsible for the result. In reply to an insinuation by Mr. Stanly, that something improper had taken place between the democratic party and the free-soilers, Mr. Bayly said: "I am rejoiced that the gentleman has made the remarks he did. It enables us to brand the rumor, in the outset, as it deserves. It is hardly necessary for me to say that it has no foundation in truth."

Mr. Ashmun (whig), of Massachusetts, then asked Mr. Bayly if a correspondence had not taken place between the member from Indiana (Mr. Brown) and some member of the free-soil party, in which he had pledged himself to constitute the committees in a manner satisfactory to them. Mr. Bayly said he knew of no such correspondence; and turning to Mr. Brown, he said, "Has any such correspondence taken place?" Mr. Brown shook his head, and Mr. Bayly said: "I am authorized to say that no such correspondence has taken place. The house is in a condition in which it is impossible for it to be organized unless the free-soilers vote with one of the great parties composing it. Suppose they had offered to vote with the gentleman, would he have spurned their support? Or would he have considered it would have been quite right in us, in such a contingency, to have imputed an improper combination to them? We must be judged of by the character of the great body of our party, and not of those who are accidentallly thrown with us."

Mr. Bayly subsequently said, that since he was last up he had held a conversation with Mr. Brown. "I was mistaken in saying that no correspondence had taken place between him and the free-soilers. A correspondence has taken place; but in that he assures me that he had refused to pledge himself; and had said no more than that, in forming the committees he would place the members of that party in such positions as their standing in the house and country would seem to him to make proper. But the correspondence will be produced, and it will speak foi itself." Mr. Brown, of Indiana, being called upon, made an explanation to the house of his course and position. Among other matters, he stated that all the free-soilers had asked was that the committees on the District of Columbia, on the judiciary, and on the territories, should be so constituted as that every section of the Union might be fairly represented—the Wilmot proviso men and the anti-Wilmot proviso men. He had stated to these gentlemen that he would so constitute these committees as that all sections of the Union should be represented. This much he had stated, and by that position he would abide now.

Mr. Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, the leader of the free-soilers, addressed the house, stating the substance of his conversation with Mr. Brown. He had also addressed a note to that gentleman, asking him whether, if elected speaker, he would so organize the committees as to be satisfactory to himself and friends. From the verbal conversations which he had held with Mr. Brown, Mr. Wilmot said, he had reason to believe that a majority of these committees would be composed of fair northern men.

After some conversational remarks between various members, Mr. Brown read to the house a copy of his letter to Mr. Wilmot, in the following words:—

"Washington, *December* 10, 1849.

"Dear Sir: In answer to yours of this date, I will state, that should I be elected speaker of the house of representatives, I will constitute the committees on the District of Columbia, on territories, and on the judiciary, in such manner as shall be satisfactory to yourself and your friends. I am a representative from a free state, and have always been opposed to the extension of slavery, and believe that the federal government should be relieved from the responsibility of slavery, where they have the constitutional power to abolish it. I am yours truly, "W. J. Brown.

"Hon. David Wilmot."

The letter of Mr. Wilmot to which the foregoing was a reply, is as follows:—

"*December* 10, 1849.

"Dear Sir: In the conversation which I had with you this evening, you were free to say, that if elected speaker of the house of representatives, you would constitute the committees on territories, on the judiciary, and the District of Columbia, in a manner that should be satisfactory to myself and the friends with whom I have had the honor to act. I have communicated this to my friends; and if, in reply to this note, you can give them the same assurance, they will give you a cheerful and cordial support. Respectfully yours, "D. Wilmot."

Mr. Brown further explained to the house, and said that "he was no sectional man; and, as God was his judge, if he had been chosen speaker of this house, he would have constituted the committees in such a manner as to give satisfaction to both the north and the south. He would have upon these committees the ablest men, from both the north and the south." Tendering his earnest and sincere thanks to his friends for the manner in which he had been sustained, he withdrew his name as a candidate. He said, further, that he would scorn to occupy the chair under circumstances in which his action was liable to misrepresentation. "I have always," said Mr. Brown, "opposed the agitation of this question. I look upon slavery as one of the compromises of the constitution. I will stand by that institution, and sustain it as guarantied by the constitution of the United States. And I am gratified that I have it in my power to say, that I represent, in part, a state which will do the same thing."

Mr. Bayly, of Virginia, said: "Had I known of the existence and character of the correspondence which has just been read, and of the interviews preceding it, no earthly consideration would have induced me to vote as I did. I thought the insinuations made by the gentlemen from North Carolina and Massachusetts, when they made their remarks, unfounded and illiberal; but I rejoice now that they were made, and I thank them for them. They have led to a disclosure to which the country was entitled; and it has been made in time, thank God, to save us from a load of obloquy."

Mr. Brown was defended by his colleague, Mr. Dunham, after which the house adjourned. On the following day various propositions were made to bring about an election of speaker, but nothing was agreed upon, and the house proceeded to vote the 41st time, 224 members voting for speaker, but no candidate receiving over 59 votes, that number being given to Mr. Winthrop and 40 to Mr. Cobb. The house continued to vote and debate from day to day until the 22d of December, when, after 59 unsuccessful attempts from the first vote on the 3d of December had been made, to choose a speaker, the following resolution, offered by Mr. Stanton (democrat), of Tennessee, was adopted, by a vote of 113 to 106: —

"*Resolved*, That the house will proceed immediately to the election of speaker, *viva voce;* and if, after the roll shall have been called three times, no member shall have received a majority of the whole number of votes, the roll shall again be called, and the member who shall then receive the largest number of votes, provided it be a majority of a quorum, shall be declared to be chosen speaker."

The house then proceeded to vote three times unsuccessfully for speaker. On the last vote, 111 being necessary to a choice, Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Cobb each received 97 votes, and there were 27 scattering. Thereupon a final vote was taken, it being the 63d time from the commencement, and the following was the result: for Mr. Cobb, 102; Mr. Winthrop, 99; Mr. Wilmot (free soil), 8; and there were 12 scattering votes (viz., 5 whigs, 6 democrats, and one free soil): total, 221 votes.

Mr. Cobb, the democratic candidate, having received a plurality, on motion of Mr. Stanly (whig), of North Carolina, it was resolved, "That the Hon. Howell Cobb, a representative from the state of Georgia, be declared duly elected speaker of the house for the 31st Congress — which resolution was adopted by a vote of 147 to 34. Mr. Cobb was then conducted to the chair by Mr. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, and Mr. M'Dowell, of Virginia, and made his acknowledgments in a suitable speech.

The house having been organized by the election of speaker, the president's message was received on the 24th of December, three weeks after the day that Congress had assembled. After another tedious and protracted contest in the election for clerk of the house, Thomas J. Campbell, the whig candidate, was elected on the 20th trial, receiving 112 votes against 109 — several democrats voting for him, to end the controversy.

After Congress had been completely organized by the election of its officers, a vehement and protracted struggle commenced with regard to the organization of the new territories, the admission of California, and the boundary between Texas and New Mexico, all of which subjects were connected with the agitation of the question of the extension of slavery.

The senate formed a quorum on the 3d of December, when the vice-president, Mr. Fillmore, took the chair. Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, who had been re-elected, and Mr. Shields, of Illinois, who had been again chosen by the legislature of that state, were present, and being qualified took their seats.

On the 21st of January, the president, in answer to a resolution of the house of representatives, transmitted a special message on the affairs of California and New Mexico, stating that he had advised the people of those territories to form state constitutions, and submit the same to Congress, with a prayer for admission into the Union. He also stated the difficulties with Texas respecting the boundary between that state and New Mexico; and that the people of the western part of California had formed a constitution which they would submit to Congress, and the president urged it upon their consideration. The proposed state was called Deseret by the inhabitants, but it was afterward organized as a territory under the name of Utah.

The president's plan of adjusting the difficulties between the north and south, on the subject of slavery, made no provision for the settlement of the boundary of Texas, which state claimed to include most of the people of New Mexico and her entire territory east of the Rio Grande, within the former's limits and rightful jurisdiction. To this assumption the people of New Mexico manifested the most determined and active hostility.

The people of California, having held a convention for that purpose, had adopted a state constitution, which the president transmitted to Congress on the 13th of February, and the question of its admission into the Union was among the earliest subjects under debate in both houses. Previously, namely, on the 16th of January, Mr. Foote, of Mississippi, had presented in the senate a bill "to provide for the organization of a territorial government in California, Deseret, and New Mexico, and to enable the people of Jacinto, with the assent of Texas, to provide a constitution and state government, and for the admission of such state into the Union, upon an equal footing with the original states, in all respects whatever." The same subject came up as the order of the day on the 22d, and was debated at great length. On the 29th of January, Mr. Clay presented a series of resolutions as a basis of compromise to settle the various questions agitated in Congress relative to the restriction of slavery —providing for the admission of California into the Union as a state; the formation of territorial governments in other parts of the territory acquired from Mexico; fixing the boundary of Texas and New Mexico; proposing to Texas to pay off her debt contracted prior to annexation to the United States; declaring that it is inexpedient to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia while that institution exists in Maryland, without the consent of that state and that of the people of the district, and without just compensation to the owners of slaves within the district; declaring that it is expedient to prohibit the slave-trade in the district; that more effectual provision ought to be made by law for the restitution of fugitive slaves; and that Congress has no power to prohibit or obstruct the trade in slaves between the slaveholding states. These resolutions were supported and explained by Mr. Clay, in an elaborate speech, which was replied to by Mr. Calhoun, of South Carolina, and other senators from the south, in opposition, also by Mr. Seward, of New York, and other northern senators, who opposed the resolutions as conceding too much to the slaveholding interest. Mr. Webster, of Massachusetts, sustained the plan of compromise. In allusion to the project of disunion, he scouted the idea of peaceable secession. Secession there might be, but it would be revolution. He said that any scheme proposed by southern gentlemen for the mitigation of the admitted evils of slavery, would meet with his full consent and hearty concurrence.

Governor Brown, of Florida, having been asked by the Florida delegation in Congress to use his official authority in organizing a plan of representation for that state in a convention of delegates from the slaveholding states at Nashville, Tennessee, in reply disclaimed all authority for that purpose. He considered such a convention as revolutionary in its tendency, and directly against the spirit of the constitution of the United States.

On the 31st of March, John C. Calhoun, a senator from South Carolina, died at Washington, being a few days over 68 years of age. He had been for some time in declining health, and the excitement of the recent events in Congress proved too much for his undermined constitution. Mr. Calhoun had occupied a conspicuous position in public life for nearly half a century, successively occupying the stations of a member of the legislature of his own state; a representative in Congress; secretary of war in Monroe's administration; vice-president of the United States; a senator from South Carolina; secretary of state in the cabinet of John Tyler; and again United States senator — in which station he remained until his death.

On the 12th of April, Mr. Campbell, clerk of the house of representatives, died, and on the 15th the speaker announced the event to the house, which adopted resolutions of respect for his memory. On the 16th the house proceeded to the election of a clerk, and on the 17th Richard M. Young, democrat, was chosen, receiving 96 votes against 92 for other candidates. Mr. Young had some years previous been a United States senator from Illinois.

Mr. Crawford, secretary of war, made a communication to the house of representatives on the 3d of April, asking an investigation into his conduct in relation to a claim of the representatives of George Galphin, which claim had been adjudicated at one of the departments of the government, and was attracting public attention. On motion of Mr. Toombs, of Georgia, the subject was referred to a select committee of nine members, to be appointed by the speaker.

This Galphin claim was an affair of long standing against the government, but had been finally passed upon by Congress, and paid by the secretary of the treasury, with interest, the opinion of the attorney-general being given in favor of payment of principal and interest. The amount had been paid to Mr. Crawford, since he had been a member of the cabinet, he being one of the parties interested in the claim. The objection to this settlement of the claim, by a large portion of the public and in Congress was, that Mr. Crawford had made use of his position as a member of the cabinet to obtain payment of an unusually large amount, principal and interest, the interest being dwelt upon as most objectionable. The select committee reported a statement and resolutions on the 17th of May, the latter declaring that the claim was not a just demand against the United States—that the act of Congress made it the duty of the secretary of the treasury to pay the principal; but that the act did not authorize the secretary to pay the interest on said claim, and the latter was, therefore, not in conformity with law or precedent. A minority report was also presented, declaring that the payment of both principal and interest of the claim had been in conformity to law and precedent.

Protracted debates took place on this matter, but it remained undecided until the 24th of September, when Mr. Crawford sent another communication to the house, asking, as the payment of interest was a judicial question, that legal proceedings should be instituted against him. A joint resolution directing the president to cause such suit to be brought against Mr. Crawford, in the circuit court of the district of Georgia, passed the house of representatives by a vote of 142 to 20, but the following day was laid on the table in the senate, by a vote of 27 to 25; and thus the matter terminated for the session.

On the 25th of February, Mr. Foote, of Mississippi, moved that the subject of territorial governments for California, Deseret (or Utah), and New Mexico, be referred to a select committee of thirteen, with instructions to take upon themselves the duty of endeavoring to procure a compromise embracing all the questions now arising out of the institution of slavery. This resolution was taken up, and discussed from time to time, but was not finally disposed of until the 18th of April, when it was adopted by a vote of 30 to 22—the resolutions of compromise offered by Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, and others by Mr. Bell, of Tennessee, being also ordered to be referred to the same committee, who the next day were chosen by ballot, and Mr. Clay elected chairman.

On the 8th of May, Mr. Clay, from the select committee, reported a plan of compromise in a series of bills, the first to admit California as a state, to establish territorial governments for Utah and New Mexico, and making proposals to Texas for the establishment of her boundaries; second — a bill to provide for the recovery of fugitive slaves; and third — a bill abolishing the slave-trade in the District of Columbia. These compromise measures led to a long series of debates, but they were all rejected on the 31st of July, by striking out all the material parts except the proposition to establish a territorial government in Utah.

Another course was then adopted, and on the 2d of August the senate, by a vote of 30 to 22, passed a bill introduced by Mr. Pearce, of Maryland, to settle the boundary of Texas, and to pay that state ten millions of dollars in consideration of reduction of boundaries, cession of territory, and relinquishment of claims against the United States. Other measures of compromise easily followed. A bill for the admission of California as a state, passed the senate on the 13th of August — 34 to 18; on the 15th, a bill for providing a territorial government for New Mexico also passed; and subsequently, in September, a fugitive-slave bill, and a bill for the suppression of the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, also passed the senate, the former by a vote of 27 to 12 — the latter by 33 to 19. These bills all passed the house of representatives during the month of September, and receiving the signature of President Fillmore, became laws. The vote in the house, on the Texas boundary bill, was 108 to 98; on the bill for the admission of California, 150 to 57; on the Utah bill, 97 to 85; on the fugitive-slave bill, 109 to 75; on the act to suppress the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, 124 to 59. The Texas boundary bill from the senate was amended in the house, by providing for the territorial organization of New Mexico, and in that shape was concurred in by the senate. The constitution of California, framed by a convention of the people of that state, prohibited slavery; which prohibition was of course recognised by the act of Congress admitting the state into the Union. The bills providing for the territorial governments of New Mexico and Utah left the question of slavery open for future decision.

In the month of June, a convention of delegates from the slaveholding states was held at Nashville, Tennessee, and adopted sundry resolutions on the slavery question; presenting two alternatives for the settlement of the controversy, viz., the early enactment by Congress of such laws as may be necessary and expedient to secure to the slaveholder wishing to emigrate to the territories with his slaves, his rights of ownership in them; or a partition of the territories between the slave and free sections of the country, on the basis of the Missouri compromise line (36° 30′ north latitude).

In the midst of the exciting debates in Congress, and when the public anxiety was at its height respecting the agitation of the slavery-extension question, the troubles in Texas respecting the boundary with New Mexico, and the application for the admission of California into the Union, the nation was startled with the melancholy tidings of the death of General Taylor, president of the United States. In our memoir of the president, we have stated the particulars of his death, which took place on the evening of the 9th of July. This event was officially announced by Mr. Fillmore, the late vice-president, who, by the constitution, immediately succeeded to the presidency, in a message to both houses and in the following communication to the senate : —

"WASHINGTON, *July* 10, 1850.

" *To the Senate of the United States :* —

"In consequence of the lamented death of Zachary Taylor, late president of the United States, I shall no longer occupy the chair of the senate; and I have thought that a formal communication to that effect, through your secretary, might enable you the more promptly to proceed to the choice of a presiding officer. "MILLARD FILLMORE."

On the following day, William R. King was unanimously elected, by resolution, president *pro tem.* of the senate.

The several members of the cabinet who had been appointed by President Taylor having immediately tendered their resignations to the new president, Mr. Fillmore, and the same having been accepted, the administration of General Taylor was terminated. No important acts of Congress having been matured previous to his death, the administration of General Taylor had no opportunity to develop itself, except by the actions of the executive in appointments to office, and such measures were intrusted to the president by the constitution and laws. Embarrassed as he was by the delay of settlement of important questions by Congress, the public, it is believed, were generally satisfied with the good intentions of General Taylor, and his exertions to preserve tranquillity, and to conscientiously perform the duties of his high office. His public character as a civilian during his brief career in the executive chair, must be known and appreciated by the principles avowed in his inaugural address; and by the recommendations in his communications to Congress.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

MILLARD FILLMORE.

John Fillmore, the great grandfather of Millard Fillmore, and the common ancestor of all of that name in the United States, was of English origin, and was born about the year 1702, in Ipswich, Massachusetts, and feeling a strong propensity for a sea-faring life, at the age of about nineteen went on board a fishing vessel, which sailed from Boston. The vessel had been but a few days out when it was captured by a noted pirate-ship, commanded by Captain Phillips, and young Fillmore was kept as a prisoner. He remained on board the pirate-ship nine months, enduring every hardship which a strong constitution and firm spirit were capable of sustaining; and, though frequently threatened with instant death unless he would sign the piratical articles of the vessel, he steadily refused until two others had been taken prisoners, who also refusing to join the crew, the three made an attack upon the pirates, and, after killing several, took the vessel and brought it safe into Boston harbor. The narrative of this adventure has been for many years in print, and details one of the most daring and successful exploits on record. The surviving pirates were tried and executed, and the heroic conduct of the captors was acknowledged by the British government. John Fillmore afterward settled in that part of the town of Norwich now called Franklin, in Connecticut, where he died.

His son, Nathaniel Fillmore, settled at an early day in Bennington, Vermont, then called the Hampshire grants, where he lived till his death, in 1814. He served in the French war, and was a true whig of the revolution, proving his devotion to his country's cause by gallantly fighting as a lieutenant under General Stark, in the battle of Bennington.

Nathaniel Fillmore, his son, and father of Millard, was born at Bennington on the 19th of April, 1771, and early in life removed to what is now called Summer Hill, Cayuga county, New York, where Millard was born, January 7th, 1800. Nathaniel was a farmer, and soon after lost all his property by a bad title to one of the military lots he had purchased. About the year 1802, he removed to the town of Sempronius (now Niles) in the same county, and resided there until 1819, when he removed to Erie county, where he still lives, cultivating a small farm with his own hands. He was a strong and uniform supporter of Jefferson, Madison, and Tompkins, and is now a firm whig.

His mother, Phebe Millard, the daughter of Doctor Abiathar Millard, was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. She was a woman of limited education, but of a very high order of intellect, united with a native grace and beauty, and exquisite sensibility, that distinguished her among her sex. She died in 1831, and consequently did not live to enjoy—what only a fond mother can appreciate—the national reputation of her son.

The narrow means of his father deprived Millard of any advantages of education beyond what were afforded by the imperfect and ill-taught common schools of the county. Books were scarce and dear, and at the age of fourteen, when more favored youths are far advanced in their classical studies, or enjoying in colleges the benefit of well-furnished libraries, young Fillmore had read but little except his common school-books and the Bible. At that period he was sent into the then wilds of Livingston county, to learn the clothier's trade. He remained there about four months, and was then placed with another person to pursue the same business and wool-carding in the town where his father lived. A small village library that was formed there, soon after, gave him the first means of acquiring general knowledge through books. He improved the opportunity thus offered; the appetite grew by what it fed upon. The thirst for knowledge soon became insatiate, and every leisure moment was spent in reading. Four years were passed in this way, working at his trade, and storing his mind, during such hours as he could command, with the contents of books of history, biography, and travels. At the age of nineteen he fortunately made an acquaintance with the late Walter Wood, Esq., whom many will remember as one of the most estimable citizens of Cayuga county. Judge Wood was a man of wealth and great business capacity: he had an excellent law library, but did little professional business. He soon saw that under the rude exterior of the clothier's boy were powers that only required proper development to raise the possessor to high distinction and usefulness, and advised him to quit his trade and study law. In reply to the objection of a lack of education, means, and friends, to aid him in a course of professional studies, Judge Wood kindly offered to give him a place in his office, to advance money to defray his expenses, and wait until success in business should furnish the means of repayment. The offer was accepted. The apprentice boy bought his time, entered the office of Judge Wood, and for more than two years applied himself closely to business and study. He read law and general literature, and studied and practised surveying.

Fearing he should incur too large a debt to his benefactor, he taught

Millard Fillmore

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school for three months in the year, and acquired the means of partially supporting himself. In the fall of 1821, he removed to the county of Erie, and the next spring entered a law office in Buffalo. There he sustained himself by teaching, and continued his legal studies until the spring of 1823, when he was admitted to the Common Pleas, and being too diffident of his then untried powers to enter into competition with the older members of the bar in Buffalo, he removed to Aurora in that county, where he commenced the practice of law. In 1826, he was married to Abigail Powers, the youngest child of the Rev. Lemuel Powers, deceased, by whom he has two children, a son and a daughter. She is a lady of great worth, modest and unobtrusive in her deportment, and highly esteemed for her many virtues. Mrs. Fillmore is descended on the maternal side from Henry Leland, one of the early settlers of Massachusetts.

In 1827, Mr. Fillmore was admitted as an attorney, and in 1829, as a counsellor, in the supreme court. Previous to this time his practice had been very limited, but his application to juridical studies had been constant and severe, and it is not to be doubted that during these few years of comparative seclusion he acquired that general knowledge of the fundamental principles of the law which has mainly contributed in after-life to give him an elevated rank among the members of that liberal profession. His legal acquirements and skill as an advocate, soon attracted the attention of his professional brethren in Buffalo, and he was offered a highly-advantageous connection with an elder member of the bar in that city, which he accepted, and removed there in the spring of 1830, in which place he continued to reside until his election as comptroller, and removal to Albany, in the winter of 1847.

His first entrance into public life was in January, 1829, when he took his seat as a member of the assembly, from Erie county, to which office he was re-elected the two following years. The democratic party in those three sessions, as for many years before and after, held triumphant sway in both houses of the legislature, and but little opportunity was afforded a young member of the opposition to distinguish himself. But talent, integrity, and assiduous devotion to public business, will make a man felt and respected, even amid a body of opposing partisans; and Mr. Fillmore, although in a hopeless minority, so far as any question of a political or party bearing was involved, on all question of a general character soon won the confidence of the house in an unexampled degree. It was a common remark among the members, "If Fillmore says it is right, we will vote for it."

The most important measure of a general nature that came up during his service in the state legislature, was the bill to abolish imprisonment for debt. In behalf of that great and philanthropic measure, Mr. Fillmore took an active part, urging with unanswerable arguments its justice and expediency, and, as a member of the committee on the subject, aiding to perfect its details. That portion of the bill relating to the justices' courts was draughted by him, the remainder being the work of the Hon. John C. Spencer. The bill, which was introduced by Silas M. Stilwell, of New York, met with a fierce, unrelenting opposition at every step of its progress, and to Millard Fillmore, with his then coadjutors, are the people indebted for expunging from the statute-book that relic of a barbarous age — imprisonment for debt.

He was elected to Congress in the fall of 1832, and took his seat in the stormy session immediately succeeding the removal of the deposites from the United States bank. In those days, the business of the house, and debates, were led by old and experienced members — new ones, unless they enjoyed a wide-spread and almost national reputation — rarely taking an active and conspicuous part. Little chance, therefore, was afforded Mr. Fillmore, a member of the opposition, young and unassuming, of displaying those qualities that so eminently fitted him for legislative usefulness. But the school was one admirably qualified more fully to develop and cultivate those powers which, under more favorable circumstances, have enabled him to render such varied and important services to his country. As he has ever done in all the stations he has filled, he discharged his duty with scrupulous fidelity, never omitting, on all proper occasions, any effort to advance the interests of his constituents and the country, and winning the respect and confidence of all.

At the close of his term of service he resumed the practice of his profession, which he pursued with distinguished reputation and success, until, yielding to the public voice, he consented to become a candidate; and was re-elected to Congress in the fall of 1836. In the 25th Congress Mr. Fillmore took a more active part than he did during his first term, and on the assembling of the next Congress, to which he was re-elected by a largely-increased majority, he was assigned a prominent place on what, next to that of ways and means, it was justly anticipated would become the most important committee of the house — that on elections It was in this Congress that the famous contested New Jersey case came up. It would swell this biographical sketch to too great a length to enter upon the details of that case, and it is the less necessary to do so, inasmuch as the circumstances attending it are given in the history of the administration of Van Buren, in another part of this work.

The prominent part which Mr. Fillmore took in that case, his patient investigation of all its complicated, minute details, the clear, convincing manner in which he set forth the facts, the lofty and indignant eloquence with which he denounced the meditated act, all strongly directed public attention to him as one of the ablest men of that Congress, distinguished as it was by the eminent ability and statesmanship of many of its members. The agitation in Congress of this New Jersey election case, and the currency measures adopted by the administration of Mr. Van Buren, were among the causes which contributed to the overthrow of the democratic party and the triumph of the whigs in the presidential election of 1840, and the majority obtained by them of members elected to both houses in the 27th Congress.

On the assembling of the 27th Congress, to which Mr. Fillmore was re-elected by a majority larger than was ever before given in his district, he was placed at the head of the committee of ways and means. The duties of that station, always arduous and responsible, were at that time peculiarly so. A new administration had come into power, and found public affairs in a state of the greatest derangement. Accounts had been wrongly kept; peculation of every kind abounded in almost every department of the government; the revenue was inadequate to meet the ordinary expenses; the already large existing debt was rapidly swelling in magnitude; commerce and manufactures were depressed; the currency was deranged; banks were embarrassed; and general distress pervaded the community. To bring order out of disorder; to replenish the national treasury; to provide means that would enable the government to meet the demands against it, and to pay off the debt; to revive the industry of the country and restore its wonted prosperity — these were the tasks devolved upon the committee of ways and means. To increase their difficulties, the minority, composed of the defeated party, instead of aiding to repair the existing evils, uniformly opposed almost every measure brought forward for relief, and often their unavailing efforts were successfully aided by the executitve, Mr. Tyler. But with an energy and devotion to the public weal, worthy of all admiration, Mr. Fillmore applied himself to the task, and, sustained by a majority in Congress whose industry and zeal in the public service under peculiar embarrassments, has seldom been equalled, and never surpassed, he succeeded in its accomplishment.

The measures he brought forward, and sustained with matchless ability, speedily relieved the government from its embarrassment, and have fully justified the most sanguine expectations of their benign influence upon the country at large. A new and more accurate system of keeping accounts, rendering them clear and intelligible, was introduced. The favoritism and peculation, which had so long disgraced the departments and plundered the treasury, were checked by the requisition of contracts. The credit of the government was restored, ample means were provided for the exigencies of the public service, and the payment of the national debt incurred by the preceding administration. Commerce and manufactures revived, and prosperity and hope once more smiled upon the land. The labor of devising, explaining, and defending measures productive of such happy results, was thrown chiefly on Mr. Fillmore. He was ably sustained by his political friends in Congress; but on him, nevertheless, the main responsibility rested.

After his long and severe labors in the committee-room — labors sufficiently arduous to break down any but one of an iron constitution—sustained by a spirit that nothing could conquer, he was required to give his unremitting attention to the business of the house, to make any explanation that might be asked, and be ready with a complete and triumphant refutation of every cavil or objection that the ingenuity or sophistry of his opponents could devise. All this, too, was required to be done with promptness, clearness, dignity, and good temper. For the proper performance of these varied duties, few men are more happily qualified than Mr. Fillmore. At that fortunate age when the physical and intellectual powers are displayed in the highest perfection, and the hasty impulses of youth, without any loss of its vigor, are brought under control of large experience in public affairs, with a mind capable of descending to minute details, as well as conceiving a grand system of national policy, calm and deliberate in judgment, self-possessed and fluent in debate, of dignified presence, never unmindful of the courtesies becoming social and public intercourse, and of political integrity unimpeachable, he was admirably fitted for the post of leader of the majority in the 27th Congress.

Just before the close of the first session of this Congress, Mr. Fillmore, in a letter addressed to his constituents, signified his intention not to be a candidate for re-election. He acknowledged with gratitude and pride the cordial and generous support given him by his constituents, but the severe labor devolved upon him by his official duties demanded some relaxation, and private affairs, necessarily neglected in some degree during several years of public service, called for attention. Notwithstanding his declaration to withdraw from the station he filled with so much honor and usefulness, the convention of his district, unanimously, and by acclamation, renominated him, and urgently pressed upon him a compliance with their wishes. Mr. Fillmore was deeply affected by this last of many proofs of confidence and regard on the part of those who had known him longest and best; but he firmly adhered to the determination he had expressed, and at the close of the term for which he was elected, he returned to his home more gratified at his relief from the cares of official life, than he had ever been at the prospect of its highest rewards and honors. But though keenly enjoying the freedom from public responsibilities, and the pleasures of social intercourse in which he was now permitted to indulge, the qualities of mind and habits of systematic, close attention to business, that so eminently fitted him for a successful congressional career, were soon called into full exercise by the rapidly-increasing requirements of professional pursuits, never wholly given up. There is a fascination in the strife of politics, its keen excitements, and its occasional but always tempting, brilliant triumphs, that, when once felt, few men are able to resist so completely as to return with relish to the comparatively tame and dull occupations of private life. But to the calm and equable temperament of Mr. Fillmore, repose, after the stormy scenes in which he had been forced to take a leading part, was most grateful. He had ever regarded his profession with affection and pride, and he coveted more the just, fairly-won fame of the jurist, than the highest political distinction. He welcomed the toil, therefore, which a large practice in the higher courts imposed upon him, and was as remarkable for the thoroughness with which he prepared his legal arguments, as he was for patient, minute investigation of the dry and difficult subjects it was so often his duty to elucidate and defend in the house of representatives.

In 1844, in obedience to a popular wish too strong to be resisted, he reluctantly accepted the whig nomination for governor of New York. The issue of that conflict in which he shared in the signal defeat of his party, has become history, and though deeply pained at the result, he was only so in view of the consequences to the nation, which he believed would follow the defeat of the whig presidential ticket, and the accession to power of the democratic party, pledged to measures which he deprecated. For his own defeat, Mr. Fillmore had no regrets. He had no aspirations for the high and honorable office for which he had been a candidate, and with the failure of his election, he trusted would end any further demand upon him to serve in public life.

In 1847, a popular call, similar to that of '44, was again made upon him, to which he yielded a reluctant assent, and was elected comptroller of the state, by a majority larger than had been given to any state officer at any former election in many years. There were some peculiar causes that contributed to swell his majority at that election, but, independent of them, there can be no doubt that the general conviction of his eminent fitness for the office, would, under any circumstances of the opposing party, have given him a great and triumphant vote. That such evidence of the confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens was gratifying to his feelings, can not be doubted, but few can justly appreciate the sacrifices they imposed. The duties of that office could not be discharged without abandoning at once and for ever — for who ever regained a professional standing once lost? — a lucrative business which he had been years in acquiring, nor without severing all those social ties, and breaking up all those domestic arrangements, which rendered home happy, and bound him to the city where the best portion of his life had been spent. Yet, feeling that the state had a right to command his services, he cheerfully submitted to its exactions, and on the first of January, 1848, removed to Albany, where he displayed, in the performance of the duties of his arduous and responsible office, the high ability and thorough attention which have always characterized the discharge of all his public trusts.

We now approach the period in the life of Mr. Fillmore, when the entire Union evinced its appreciation of his talents and worth, and a new theatre was presented to him for the exercise of matured judgment, consummate prudence, and an abiding attachment and fidelity to the constitution and Union, not excelled since the days of the revolution.

In the winter of 1844, when the eyes of the whigs were turned to Henry Clay, of Kentucky, as their leader in the contest of that year, by a numerous portion of the party Mr. Fillmore was looked to as the candidate for the vice-presidency.

The whigs of the state of New York, in general convention, unanimously nominated Henry Clay for president, and Millard Fillmore for vice-president.

At the Baltimore convention, which met in May of that year, the delegates from New York, with one exception (the late Ambrose Spencer, who was president of that convention) supported Mr. Fillmore; but Mr. Frelinghuysen, a distinguished citizen of New Jersey, received the nomination.

The startling results of the campaign in Mexico, and the admiration and regard everywhere entertained for the bravery, cool judgment, and eminent services of the hero of Resaca de la Palma, Palo Alto, Monterey, and Buena Vista, early designated General Taylor as the next president of the United States. While it was well known that General Taylor had but little experience in the civil affairs of the country, the confidence in his integrity, sound common sense, and practical wisdom, was unbounded; and a statesman, ready and willing cordially to co-operate with General Taylor in carrying on the administration, and well versed in the details of governmental affairs, was universally sought for by the whig party, which, at that early day, it was clearly perceived, must be triumphant in the coming contest.

In view of all these considerations, the whigs of the Union, in national convention, selected Millard Fillmore for vice-president, and thereafter the names of Taylor and Fillmore became the rallying cry of that party throughout the Union, and resulted in the triumphant election of the whig candidates.

In February, 1849, Mr. Fillmore resigned the office of comptroller of the state of New York, to enter upon the discharge of the duties of vice-president.

It is not too much to say, that, distinguished as were the predecessors of Mr. Fillmore in the office of comptroller, for integrity of character, financial talents, and a faithful regard to the interests of the state, no one of them left the office with a higher reputation than Mr. Fillmore, or with a more general conviction on the part of the public, that all the duties of the station had been discharged with ability and fidelity.

Taking the oath of office as vice-president, his address to the senate was commended as well for the modesty and dignity of its delivery, as for the sound and patriotic principles enunciated.

The session of Congress which commenced in December, 1849, proved more exciting that any previous one, and it soon became apparent to every dispassionate observer, that the strength of our institutions was then to be tested; and that upon the wisdom, firmness, discretion, and patriotism, of those in power, would depend the continuance of the Union and the constitution.

In 1826, the presiding officer of the senate, John C. Calhoun, had assumed the position that the vice-president had no power to call a senator to order for words spoken in debate. This decision had been acquiesced in, and was the established usage of the senate. Vice-President Fillmore resolved to resume what he deemed the just duties of the presiding officer. In a neat, perspicuous address to the senate, on a fitting occasion, he announced his determination to maintain decorum in debate, and to call senators to order for any offensive words used. The senate evinced its appreciation and sanction of these views by unanimously ordering them to be entered at length on their journal, where they stand as evidence of the firmness of the presiding officer of the senate, and his determination to shrink from no duty. The courtesy, ability, and dignity, exhibited by Mr. Fillmore, while presiding over the deliberations of the senate, received universal commendation.

In the discharge of his high and delicate duties the vice-president was engaged, when the country was startled by the announcement of the sudden illness and almost immediate decease of General Taylor.

At this critical period, the most difficult and exciting questions which had ever agitated the people of this country were pending. The whole Union was aroused; section was arrayed against section; party divisions were broken up; and a universal gloom prevailed.

The cabinet resigned, but the new president, with dignity and delicacy, declined to consider their resignations until after the obsequies to the lamented dead had been performed.

On the 10th of July, Mr. Fillmore, as president, took the oath to "*preserve, protect, and defend the constitution of the United States*"—and men then felt that that solemn promise would be faithfully kept—that the crisis was passed—and that the Union and the constitution would remain to them and their posterity.

Within two weeks the president selected a cabinet, distinguished for its ability, patriotism, and devotion to the Union, and possessing, in an eminent degree, the confidence of the country.

With his constitutional advisers, the president immediately applied himself to relieve the embarrassments of the country, and to the best means of restoring quiet and confidence to all sections of the Union.

His message to Congress on the difficulties with Texas, presented views so calm, just, and reasonable, yet firm and decided, that confidence in the administration was instantly inspired, and this message was regarded as the bow of promise and hope. The settlement of that vexed question opened the way for the speedy adjustment of others.

The assembling of Congress on the second of December, 1850, was looked forward to with anxiety, as it was well known that then the annual message of the president would be delivered, disclosing the views and principles of the new administration. This document was calm, conciliatory, yet firm, and thoroughly American in all its parts; showing that the president was governed by an earnest desire to conciliate the warring sections and restore harmony to the Union.

In every station in which he has been placed, Mr. Fillmore has shown himself "honest, capable, and faithful to the constitution." He is emphatically one of the people. For all that he has and is, he is indebted, under God, to his own exertions, the faithful performance of every duty, and steadfast adherence to the right. Born to an inheritance of comparative poverty, he struggled with difficulties of no ordinary character, until he has reached a proud eminence which commands the admiration of his countrymen.

It is the peculiar boast of our country, that its highest honors and dignities are the legitimate objects of ambition to the humblest in the land as well as to those most favored by the gifts of birth and fortune. Ours is a government of the people, and from the people, emphatically, have sprung those who, in the army or navy, on the bench of justice, or in the halls of legislation, have shed the brightest lustre on the page of our history. So universally almost is this the case, that when we find an instance to the contrary, of one born to a fortune and enjoying the advantages of influential connections, rising to a high place in the councils of the nation, the exception deserves especial note for its rarity. No merit is therefore claimed for Millard Fillmore on account of the fact that from comparatively humble parentage he has attained his present eminent position. His history, however, affords a useful lesson, as showing what may be accomplished in the face of adverse circumstances, by intellect, aided and controlled by energy, perseverance, and strict integrity, in a public and private capacity.

In person, Mr. Fillmore is about six feet in height and well proportioned. His complexion is light, and the expression of his face is mild and intelligent, indicating prominent traits of character by which he is distinguished, among which are energy, benevolence, and strict integrity. His manners are plain and affable, and his whole deportment such as should characterize the chief magistrate of a republic.

ADMINISTRATION OF FILLMORE.

On Wednesday, July 10th, 1850, Millard Fillmore — who had been elected vice-president in 1848, having acceded to the presidency in consequence of the death of President Taylor the previous night, viz., 9th of July — transmitted to both houses of Congress the following messages: —

"*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:* —

"I have to perform the melancholy duty of announcing to you that it has pleased Almighty God to remove from this life Zachary Taylor, late president of the United States. He deceased last evening, at the hour of half-past ten o'clock, in the midst of his family, and surrounded by affectionate friends, calmly and in the full possession of all his faculties. Among his last words were these, which he uttered with emphatic distinctness: 'I have always done my duty — I am ready to die — my only regret is for the friends I leave behind me.'

"Having announced to you, fellow-citizens, this most afflicting bereavement, and assuring you that it has penetrated no heart with deeper grief than mine, it remains for me to say, that I propose this day, at 12 o'clock, in the hall of the house of representatives, in the presence of both houses of Congress, to take the oath prescribed by the constitution, to enable me to enter on the execution of the office which this event has devolved on me. "Millard Fillmore."

"Washington, *July* 10, 1850."

"*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:* —

"A great man has fallen among us, and a whole country is called to an occasion of unexpected, deep, and general mourning.

"I recommend to the two houses of Congress to adopt such measures as in their discretion may seem proper, to perform with due solemnities the funeral obsequies of Zachary Taylor, late president of the United States; and thereby to signify the great and affectionate regard of the American people for the memory of one whose life has been devoted to the public service; whose career in arms has not been surpassed in usefulness or brilliancy; who has been so recently raised by the unsolicited voice of the people to the highest civil authority in the government which he administered with so much honor and advantage to his country; and by whose sudden death so many hopes of future usefulness have been blighted for ever.

"To you, senators and representatives of a nation in tears, I can say nothing which can alleviate the sorrow with which you are oppressed. I appeal to you to aid me, under the trying circumstances which surround me, in the discharge of the duties from which, however much I may be oppressed by them, I dare not shrink; and I rely upon him who holds in his hands the destinies of nations, to endow me with the requisite strength for the task, and to avert from our country the evils apprehended from the heavy calamity which has befallen us.

"I shall most readily concur in whatever measures the wisdom of the two houses may suggest, as befitting this deeply melancholy occasion.

"MILLARD FILLMORE.

"WASHINGTON, *July* 10, 1850."

After this message was read in the senate, Mr. Downs, of Louisiana, offered resolutions appointing a committee of arrangement for the funeral, on the part of the senate; and accompanied the introduction of the same with a eulogy upon the deceased president. Messrs. Webster, Cass, Pearce, King, and Berrien, followed in appropriate remarks, after which the resolutions were unanimously adopted. In the house similar resolutions were adopted, being offered by Mr. Conrad, of Louisiana, who addressed the house on the subject of the life and character of General Taylor, and was responded to by Messrs. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, Baker, of Illinois, Bayly, of Virginia, Hilliard, of Alabama, M'Lane, of Maryland, and Marshall, of Kentucky.

The following day the committee of arrangements for the funeral, which was fixed for Saturday, the 13th of July, made their report to both houses. Mr. Underwood, of Kentucky, made a few eloquent remarks in the senate, expressive of deep sympathy for the nation's loss, and of respect and admiration for the character of General Taylor. On motion of Mr. Webster, the report of the committee of arrangements for the funeral was concurred in. A similar report was made in the house of representatives, by Mr. Conrad, of Louisiana, one of the joint committee, and adopted. The military and naval arrangements of the funeral were placed under the direction of Major-General Scott, and Commodore Warrington, the senior naval officer present in Washington.

The funeral of General Taylor was attended by the members of both houses of Congress, the president, and other public officers, the army and naval officers in Washington, and citizens and strangers, on the 13th of July. On the 15th of July, the following joint resolution of condolence with the widow of General Taylor, was unanimously adopted by both houses.

"*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress* *assembled*, That the president of the United States be requested to transmit a copy of the proceedings of the two houses on the 10th inst., in relation to the death of the late president of the United States, to Mrs. Margaret Taylor, and to assure her of the profound respect of the two houses of Congress for her person and character, and of their sincere condolence on the late afflicting dispensation of Providence."

The president nominated the following gentlemen to compose the cabinet of the new administration, who were immediately confirmed by the senate, and entered on their respective duties: Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts, secretary of state; Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, secretary of the treasury; Charles M. Conrad, of Louisiana, secretary of war; William A. Graham, of North Carolina, secretary of the navy; Alexander H. H. Stuart, of Virginia, secretary of the interior; Nathan K. Hall, of New York, postmaster-general; John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, attorney-general. The announcement of these names as members of the cabinet of Mr. Fillmore was generally favorably received throughout the nation, and inspired the people with confidence in the administration.

A message from President Fillmore was received in the house of representatives on the 6th of August, with regard to the difficulties with Texas, and transmitting a letter from Governor Bell, of that state, in which he complained of the conduct of Colonel Monroe, civil and military governor of New Mexico. By direction of the president, Mr. Webster replied to the letter of Governor Bell, explaining the course of the government of the United States, and recalling the circumstances of the case as they existed under the military government established by the late president Polk. It was shown by Mr. Webster that the authority of the United States over New Mexico was the result of conquest, and the possession was that of a military character. The military government existed there of inevitable necessity, as much against the will of the executive as against the will of the people. The late president Taylor thought, that under these circumstances it was justifiable in the people of the territory to form a constitution without previous authority from Congress, and thereupon apply for admission as a state. It was under such a state of things and such opinions, that the order of November, 1849, was given. This order indicates no boundary, and defines no territory, except by the name of New Mexico. And so far as that indicated anything, it referred to a known territory, organized under military authority, approved by the executive, and left without remonstrance or alteration by Congress for more than three years. The president disavows any intention to assume the authority to settle the boundary dispute between New Mexico and Texas. It had been shown that Colonel Monroe could have had no intention of this kind, and that his aid was merely given to assist the people in forming a state constitution, to be afterward presented for approval to Congress. The constitution of New Mexico could have no legal validity until it was recognised by the law-making power of the government of the United States.

The object of the executive government, Mr. Webster remarked, had been, and was then, to secure the peace of the country; to maintain, as far as practicable, the state of things existing at the date of the treaty; and to uphold the rights of the respective parties until they could be settled by competent authority.

When the bill for the suppression of the slave-trade in the District of Columbia was under discussion in the senate, on the 10th of September, the other compromise measures having been adopted, as we have stated, Mr. Seward, of New York, moved an amendment, "That slavery in the district be entirely abrogated: that its abolition depend on the vote of the of the inhabitants; and that in case, on such vote being taken, it should be in favor of emancipation, the sum of two hundred thousand dollars be appropriated to pay the owners of the slaves for whatever loss they may suffer." A brief debate took place on the amendment, which, on the following day, Mr. Seward desired to withdraw, but objection being made, it was put to the vote and rejected, yeas 5, nays 45. The bill finally passed the senate substantially as reported, 33 to 19, and on the following day passed the house of representatives, 125 to 49.

Besides the compromise measures referred to, but few acts of public interest were passed by the thirty-first Congress, at this first and long session of ten months; among them were acts authorizing the negotiation of treaties with Indian tribes in Oregon; to increase the rank and file of the army; to reduce the minimum price of the mineral lands in Michigan and Wisconsin; granting the right of way and making a grant of land to the states of Illinois, Mississippi, and Alabama, in aid of the construction of a railroad from Chicago to Mobile; providing for the taking of the seventh and subsequent censuses of the United States, and to fix the number of the members of the house of representatives, and to provide for their future apportionment among the several states; several acts relating to California; making appropriations for lighthouses, light-boats, &c.; making appropriations for public buildings in the territories of Minnesota and Oregon; establishing a territorial government for Utah; making appropriations for fortifications; granting bounty lands to certain officers and soldiers who have been engaged in the military service of the United States; joint resolutions authorizing the president to accept and attach to the navy two vessels offered by Henry Grinnell, Esq., of New York, to be sent to the Arctic seas in search of Sir John Franklin and his companions; authorizing the purchase of the manuscript farewell address of George Washington. The last resolution proved ineffectual, as the manuscript of Washington's farewell address was sold at auction, in Philadelphia, and purchased by James Lenox, Esq., of New York, for $2,300, a price exceeding that which the library committee of Congress felt justified in paying for the same.

The second session of the 31st Congress commenced on Monday, the 2d of December, 1850, and terminated with the expiration of their term, at noon of the 4th of March, 1851. A considerable portion of the time of this short term was taken up in unprofitable discussions on various subjects, and many important bills which were matured by the committees of the two houses remained to be acted upon the last two weeks of the session. The consequence was the failure of many measures in which much interest was felt by the public. Some of these bills were lost through the pressure of business and want of time; others through the violence of opposition to the bills. Among the latter was the river and harbor appropriation bill, which involved principles always disputed by that portion of the democratic party who adhered to the strictest construction of the constitution, as particularly set forth in the veto message of the late president Polk, and some of his predecessors, denying to the national government full powers to construct works of internal improvement, or those works deemed of local character. A majority of the house of representatives had passed a bill making appropriations on a liberal scale, for the improvement of rivers and harbors, but it was defeated in the senate on the last night of the session, although a majority of that body were favorable to the measure, by the pertinacity and tact of the opposition, in preventing a direct vote upon the bill. A bill making appropriations for French spoliations on American commerce previous to the year 1800, was also lost; likewise a joint resolution creating the grade of lieutenant-general in the army, intended in honor of Major-General Scott, for his long military career in the service of the country.

Among the most important bills passed were the civil and diplomatic appropriation bill; the army and navy appropriation bills; a bill establishing new postoffices and post-routes; a bill making appropriations for lighthouses; an act to divide the district of Arkansas into two judicial districts; an act to reduce and modify the rates of postage, by which the rates of postage on single letters were reduced to three cents on all prepaid letters; and five cents if not prepaid, on all distances under 3,000 miles; and double those rates for distances exceeding 3,000 miles. A similar reduction was made by the bill, in the postage of newspapers and periodicals. Acts also passed, to amend the regulations for the appraisement of merchandise imported; to ascertain and settle private land claims in California; to found a military asylum for the relief and support of invalid and disabled soldiers of the army of the United States; joint resolutions for the appointment of regents of the Smithsonian institution; directing the distribution of the works of Alexander Hamilton (printed from papers previously purchased by Congress); and one authorizing the president to send a government vessel to the Mediterranean to bring Kossuth, the

Hungarian general, and other exiles among his countrymen, to the United States.

Thus terminated the labors of the thirty-first Congress, which, during its official term, had been more days in session than any preceding Congress since the adoption of the federal constitution. The peculiar circumstances of the times, and the agitation of questions of vital interest, caused the consumption of much of the time of each session; but several highly important measures were settled, after arduous debates, tending to the perpetuity of the Union and the national prosperity.

The first session of the thirty-second Congress commenced at Washington, on Monday, the first of December, 1851, and continued until the thirtieth of August, 1852—a period of two hundred and seventy-three days. There was a decided majority of members in both branches opposed to the whig administration. In the senate, thirty-six of the sixty-two members were of the democratic party; and in the house of representatives, there were one hundred and forty democrats to eighty-eight whigs, and five free-soilers, or those opposed to slavery in the new territories. The senators assembled at the hour of twelve, meridian, and a quorum being present, the president *pro tem*, William R. King, called the senate to order, and after devotional exercises, the credentials of new senators were presented. The house of representatives was called to order also at twelve o'clock, by Richard M. Young, clerk of the last house, and two hundred and eighteen members answered to their names. On voting for speaker, Linn Boyd, a democratic member from Kentucky, was chosen on the first trial, having received one hundred and eighteen votes, against ninety-five for all others. John W. Forney (democrat), of Pennsylvania, was chosen clerk on the first vote, by one hundred and twenty, against eighty-eight for all others.

On the following day the president's message was transmitted to Congress. It presented a favorable view of the condition of the country, and its affairs domestic and foreign. Allusion having been made in the message to the resolution of Congress authorizing the president to employ a public vessel to convey to this country, from their exile in Turkey, Louis Kossuth, late governor of Hungary, and his associates, and they having arrived in the United States, Mr. Foote, of Mississippi, introduced a joint resolution in the senate, to provide for the reception and entertainment of Kossuth at the metropolis of the Union. A joint resolution was subsequently presented by Mr. Seward, a senator from New York; which, after much discussion, was adopted by a large vote. It was in the following words: "That Congress, in the name and behalf of the people of the United States, give Louis Kossuth a cordial welcome to the capital and the country." The objections urged against this resolution were, that no foreigner but Lafayette had ever received so exalted an honor as a national welcome, and that he had peculiar claims on this nation, which were wanting in the case of Kossuth; that this measure was against all international precedent; that it would embroil us with several of the European powers, with whom we were now on peaceful terms; and that non-interference with transatlantic dissensions was the fundamental principle of our national policy, solemnly established by precedents in the administrations of Washington and Madison. It was further contended, that the cause of free institutions abroad was more truly fostered by the growth and prosperity of the United States, than it could ever be by the most successful war. The advocates of the resolution urged that the government had committed the country in this matter, by placing a national vessel at the service of Kossuth, and the welcome was but the consummation of the invitation. The measure finally passed both houses by large majorities.

According to the accepted offer of the United States government to convey the Hungarian exiles to this country, the United States steamship Mississippi had in September, 1851, sailed from Constantinople through the Dardanelles. A Turkish frigate also left her moorings in the Bosphorus for the port of Gemlik, where Kossuth and his comrades, who had been under the protection of Turkey at Kutaya, were to embark. They were received with due honor on board of the United States ship, which immediately sailed for Marseilles. Being refused a passage through France, by the French government, Kossuth remained on board the steamer until she reached Gibraltar. Being determined to make a hasty visit to England, he left the American ship, and proceeded to Southampton in an English steamer. Having received a cordial welcome from the people of several parts of England, Kossuth embarked for the United States in the steamer Humboldt, and arrived in the harbor of New York on the 5th of December, 1851. A public reception was given him by the people of Staten Island; and on the 6th, which was selected by the authorities of the city of New York to celebrate his arrival, and make a great demonstration of American sympathy and respect, he made his entry into the city, amid a vast concourse of people assembled to welcome him, and attended by a grand military and civic procession. His address on the occasion was remarkable for its bold and dignified sentiments, and for the highest order of eloquence. He remained for some days in New York as the guest of the city; and on the 11th of December a banquet was given him by the common council, when he made an elaborate speech, vindicating his appeal to the people of the United States in behalf of Hungary. His profound knowledge of American institutions and the foreign policy of this country, and the facility with which he spoke the English language, so recently acquired by him, with the fascinating style of his eloquence, amazed and delighted the immense audience assembled on the occasion. Various other entertainments were given him in the city, and deputations of citizens of different classes, and from various parts of the United States, waited on him with their welcome. The circumstances attending the reception of Kossuth constituted one of the most extraordinary spectacles the New World had ever yet beheld. And it was not merely the more inflammable portions of the community that felt the strange fascination excited by the Hungarian chief; but the very classes that are usually the most conservative, the most skeptical of popular judgment, and the quickest to endeavor to check the popular favor, were the foremost in hailing Kossuth as the prominent hero of revolutionary Europe, and the most eloquent orator of the nineteenth century. The first check to this enthusiasm was visible in the senate of the United States. The essential constitutional function of this body is to prevent great national questions from being carried by acclamation; and from this quarter first proceeded the caution to the nation, not to let their sympathies with the oppressed people of the Old World hurry them into useless contentions with their rulers. There was also a disposition in the president and cabinet to repress the public enthusiasm in favor of Kossuth, by giving him a formal and somewhat cool reception, and by discountenancing all efforts to commit the government of the United States to the cause of Hungary, by interfering in her favor against Austria. After public receptions and addresses at Philadelphia and Baltimore, Kossuth proceeded to Washington, where he was received by two of the senators and the United States marshal of the District of Columbia. He was shortly afterward waited upon by Mr. Webster, secretary of state, and by prominent members of Congress. On the 31st of December he was presented to the president by Secretary Webster, and Senators Seward and Shields. M. Kossuth read a short address to the president, in which he expressed his gratitude for himself, his associates, and his country, for the encouragement and sympathy shown by our government toward the Hungarian cause.

The reply of President Fillmore was as follows: "I am happy, Governor Kossuth, to welcome you to this land of freedom; and it gives me pleasure to congratulate you upon your release from a long confinement in Turkey, and your safe arrival here. As an individual, I sympathized deeply with you in your brave struggle for the independence and freedom of your native land. The American people can never be indifferent to such a contest; but our policy as a nation, in this respect, has been uniform from the commencement of our government; and my own views, as the chief executive magistrate of this nation, are fully and freely expressed in my recent message to Congress, to which you have been pleased to allude. They are the same, whether speaking to Congress here, or to the nations of Europe.

"Should your country be restored to independence and freedom, I should then wish you, as the greatest blessing you could enjoy, a restoration to your native land: but, should that never happen, I can only repeat my welcome to you and your companions here, and pray that God's blessing may rest upon you wherever your lot may be cast."

On the 5th of January, 1852, M. Kossuth was introduced to the senate. He entered the senate-chamber accompanied by Senators Cass and Seward, and leaning upon the arm of Senator Shields, who said: "Mr. President, we have the honor to announce Louis Kossuth to the senate of the United States." The president of the senate then invited the distinguished guest to a seat placed in front of the secretary's desk. The senate then adjourned, and the senators came forward and were introduced to M. Kossuth by Messrs. Seward and Shields. On the same day, the resolution inviting M. Kossuth to the house of representatives was passed by that body, by a vote of one hundred and twenty-three to fifty-four. On the second day following (January 5), the introduction took place, with the same ceremonies as in the senate. M. Kossuth, escorted by the committee of reception and followed by his suite, entered the hall, and advanced up the aisle in front of the speaker, the members of the house generally rising to receive him. Mr. Cartter, of Ohio, chairman of the committee, said:—"Mr. Speaker: We have the honor to present Governor Louis Kossuth to the house of representatives of the United States." The speaker said: "As the organ of this body, I have the honor to extend to Louis Kossuth a cordial welcome to the house of representatives of the United States." To which Kossuth replied:—"Sir: It is a remarkable fact in the history of mankind, that while, through all the past, honors were bestowed upon glory, and glory was attached only to success, the legislative authorities of this great republic bestow the highest honors upon a persecuted exile, not conspicuous by glory nor favored by success, but engaged in a just cause. There is a triumph of republican principles in this fact. Sir, in my own and my country's name, I thank the house of representatives of the United States for the honor of this cordial welcome."

M. Kossuth was then conducted by the committee to a chair which had been prepared for him, and the house adjourned for the purpose of giving the members an opportunity to pay their respects to him. The representatives were then presented by the speaker and committee of reception to M. Kossuth; as were also the immense crowd of ladies and gentlemen who had assembled on the occasion. A congressional banquet was given to Kossuth, on a subsequent day, at the National hotel, at which William R. King, president of the senate, presided; Kossuth and Speaker Boyd being on his right, and Daniel Webster, secretary of state, on the left. The room was decorated with banners, &c., and three hundred guests, including the most prominent statesmen from the representatives' hall to the cabinet, were present. The speech of Kossuth on the occasion was marked with his usual ability and eloquence. Among others who spoke in reply, the secretary of state, Daniel Webster, addressed the company in laudation of the guest of the evening, and of the importance of the events attending Kossuth's career to his own country and to this, and proceeded at length, with his usual impressiveness, to speak of the Hungarian cause—setting forth the peculiar fitness of that country for an independent government—in the course of which, he referred to his speeches in favor of Greece, in 1825, as containing the sentiments which he still held on the question of national inviolability. Mr. Webster concluded his remarks with the following sentiment: "Hungarian independence; Hungarian control of her own destinies; and Hungary as a distinct nationality among the nations of Europe."

Before leaving Washington city, Kossuth addressed a letter to the president of the United States, expressing his gratitude and thanks to the government and Congress of the United States for their kindness to him, as the humble representative of his country, from the time when they sent a steam-frigate to Asia, in order to restore him to liberty, to the moment of his official reception at Washington. These farewell thanks Kossuth directed to the president, with a request to communicate his "assurance of everlasting gratitude to the senate and house of representatives." After his departure for the west, the secretary of state, Mr. Webster, informed Kossuth, by letter, that his request would have been complied with, if it were consistent with the accepted form, and suggested as more appropriate that his communication should be made to Congress. Kossuth accordingly sent from Cincinnati a letter of thanks, inclosing a copy of his letter to President Fillmore, to the presiding officer of both houses of Congress. In the senate, his communications were read, and after debate ordered to be printed. In the house of representatives, the letter of Kossuth was received and laid on the table. Various resolutions on the subject of foreign intervention were submitted and debated in both houses of Congress, but nothing important was determined, except the evident intention shown by Congress that the uniform policy of the United States should not be changed in favor of Hungary. After visiting the western states and various other parts of the country, Kossuth returned to New York, whence he embarked for England in July, 1852.

On the 24th of December, 1851, the Congressional library, at Washington, was mostly destroyed by fire, and the whole capitol was in imminent danger of sharing the same fate. About thirty-five thousand volumes were destroyed. The number of volumes in the library was about fifty-five thousand, including the library of Mr. Jefferson, purchased by Congress after the destruction of the public buildings by the British troops in 1814. Many of the books in the Jefferson library were saved. Twelve hundred bronze medals, presented by M. Vattemare, of France, and rare and valuable books, presented by foreign governments, were lost. The original draft of the Declaration of Independence was fortunately saved, as were also some of the portraits of the presidents and various medals. The books in the adjoining room to the main library, numbering twenty thousand volumes, were saved. Congress immediately appropriated money for repairing the capitol, and for the purchase of books.

The amount of public business accomplished during this long session of Congress was but small, a large proportion of the time of both houses being taken up in the discussion of abstract questions and controverted points, leading to no definite results. The near approach of another presidential election evidently influenced the minds and actions of members of Congress, anxious for the success of their respective parties and favorites.

Henry Clay, the distinguished statesman, and one of the senators from Kentucky, died at Washington on the 29th June, 1852, aged seventy-five years. The proceedings of both branches of Congress, on the day subsequent to his death, were of the most impressive character. Men of all parties forgot their differences of opinion, in their zeal to do honor to the memory of the great statesman, and joined together in eulogies of truth and sincerity. Funeral ceremonies were performed, July 1, in the senate, after which the body was transferred to the cars, on its journey to Lexington, Kentucky. Funereal honors were paid to the memory of Mr. Clay throughout the United States.

Among the most important public acts passed at the first session of the thirty-second Congress, besides the usual civil, military, and naval appropriations, were the following: An act making appropriations for the improvement of certain harbors and rivers, these appropriations amounting to over two millions of dollars; acts appropriating two millions for the Indian department; one million three hundred and sixty-six thousand dollars for pensions; over seven hundred thousand dollars for lighthouses, &c.; and nearly two millions for the transportation of the United States mail by ocean steamers: and a joint resolution appropriating five hundred thousand dollars for the enlargement of the capitol buildings. Acts also passed for the establishment of a branch mint in California; to amend the act for the protection of steamboat passengers; appropriating six thousand dollars for the relief of certain invaders of Cuba pardoned by the queen of Spain; and an act granting the right of way to all rail and plank roads passing through the public lands of the United States.

In the house of representatives, during the discussion on partisan preparations for the presidential election, the following resolution offered by Mr. Jackson, of Georgia, was adopted, on the 5th of April, 1852: —

"*Resolved,* That we recognise the binding efficacy of the compromises of the constitution; and we believe it to be the determination of the people generally, as we hereby declare it to be ours individually, to abide by such compromises, and to sustain the laws necessary to carry them out—

the provision for the delivery of fugitive slaves, and the act of the last Congress for that purpose, included; and that we deprecate all further agitation of the questions growing out of that act of the last Congress known as the Compromise act, and of questions generally connected with the institution of slavery, as useless and dangerous."

To this resolution Mr. Hillyer, also of Georgia, offered the following as additional:—

"*Resolved*, That the series of acts passed during the first session of the thirty-first Congress, known as compromises, are regarded as a final adjustment and a permanent settlement of the questions therein embraced, and should be maintained and executed as such."

Upon the latter proposition, the vote stood: ayes, one hundred and three; noes, seventy-four. The first resolution was then also adopted, by a vote of one hundred and one to sixty-four—divided as follows:—

YEAS.

Northern Whigs	7	Northern Democrats	35
Southern Whigs	20	Southern Democrats	39
Total	27	Total	74

NAYS.

Northern Whigs	29	Northern Democrats	21
Southern Whigs	1	Southern Democrats	10
Total Whigs	30	Total Democrats	31
Free Soilers	3	Total nays	64

Three commercial treaties were ratified and proclaimed during the year 1852, namely, with the republics of Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Peru. The administration of Mr. Fillmore also projected and sent out a naval expedition to the empire of Japan. The object of the expedition, which was placed under the command of Commodore Perry, was to open a friendly communication with Japan, and, if possible, negotiate with that government a treaty of amity and commerce. The vessels of the expedition sailed at different times, during the year 1852, under instructions to rendezvous in the Chinese seas, and thence to proceed to Japan.

On the approach of the time fixed for the nomination of candidates for president and vice-president, in 1852, it was apparent that, notwithstanding the passage of compromise acts and resolutions in Congress, divisions still existed in the two great political parties of the country on the question of slavery. While democrats of the northern states were generally willing to unite at the coming election, and to consider the question of the extension of slavery as settled, those of the south were divided into what were called "Union men" and "southern-rights men,"—the latter holding the doctrine of the right of a sovereign state to secede from the

Union, whenever the rights of the state were violated by the action of the general government. This southern rights section comprised a large majority of the democratic party in most of the slaveholding states. On the other hand, the great body of the whigs of the south were Union men, and satisfied with the compromise measures adopted by Congress. But, in the northern states generally, the largest portion of the whig party were dissatisfied with some of the compromise measures referred to, although acquiescing in the same, and had on all suitable occasions, through their representatives in Congress and otherwise, opposed the extension of slavery in the territories of the United States. The abolitionists, so called, were a distinct organization on the subject of anti-slavery, and composed of persons drawn from both the democratic and whig parties.

The democratic national convention, for the nomination of candidates for president and vice-president, met at Baltimore on the 1st of June, 1852, and was organized by the appointment of John W. Davis, of Indiana (who was speaker of the house of representatives, in the 29th Congress), as president. The rule of former democratic national conventions, requiring the votes of two thirds of the whole number of delegates, was adopted. On the first ballot, the vote stood as follows: for Lewis Cass, of Michigan, 116; James Buchanan, of Pennsylvania, 93; William L. Marcy, of New York, 27; Stephen A. Douglass, of Illinois, 20; Samuel Houston, of Texas, 8; Joseph Lane, of Indiana, 13; all others, 11: total, 288 votes. No candidate having received the required number of one hundred and ninety-two, the convention continued to vote, without success, until the fourth day of their session. On the thirty-third ballot, General Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, for the first time, was voted for in the convention, and then only received the vote of one delegate. On the thirty-fifth ballot he received fifteen votes, which number was increased to fifty-five on the forty-eighth ballot, and on the forty-ninth and final ballot, he received two hundred and eighty-two votes, against six for other candidates. Franklin Pierce was therefore declared nominated by the convention as the democratic candidate for president. On balloting for vice-president, William R. King, of Alabama, received one hundred and twenty-six votes on the first, and two hundred and seventy-seven on the second ballot. He was therefore declared the democratic nominee for vice-president. A series of resolutions was adopted, declaring the views of the democratic party on certain points of national policy, and declaring resistance to "all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made;" and also a determination to "abide by, and adhere to, a faithful execution of the acts known as the compromise measures settled by the last Congress — the act reclaiming fugitives from service or labor included." The convention adjourned on the 5th

June, with confidence on the part of the members, that the renewed union of the democratic party throughout the country would insure success for their nominees over any candidates their political opponents might present to the people for their support.

On the 16th of June, the whig national convention met at Baltimore, and was organized by the appointment of John G. Chapman, of Maryland, as president, and other officers. Two days were occupied in preliminary business, part of which was the investigation of the right to several contested seats from the states of New York and Vermont. This matter being settled, on the third day, a committee consisting of one from each state, selected by the delegation therefrom, was appointed to report a series of resolutions for the action of the convention. The resolutions were reported the same day, and, after some discussion, were adopted by a vote of two hundred and twenty-seven ayes, to sixty-six noes. They set forth, that the government of the United States is one of a limited character, and is confined to the exercise of powers expressly granted by the constitution, all power not granted, or necessarily implied, being expressly reserved to the States respectively and to the people; that the Union should be revered and watched over as the palladium of our liberties; that while struggling freedom everywhere has the warmest sympathy of the whig party, they still adhere to the doctrines of the Father of his country, as announced in his farewell address, of keeping ourselves free from all entangling alliances with foreign countries, and of never quitting our own to stand upon foreign ground; that revenue ought to be raised by duties on imports, and not from direct taxation, and sound policy requires a just discrimination in laying such duties, whereby suitable encouragement may be afforded to American industry; that Congress has power to open and repair harbors, and remove obstructions from navigable rivers, whenever such improvements are necessary for the common defence, and for the protection and facility of commerce with foreign nations or among the States; that the compromise acts of the thirty-first Congress, including the fugitive slave law, are received and acquiesced in by the whig party, as a settlement, in principle and substance, of the dangerous and exciting questions which they embrace; that the whig party will maintain them, and insist upon their strict enforcement, until time and experience shall demonstrate the necessity of further legislation, to guard against their evasion or abuse, not impairing their present efficiency; and that all further agitation of the questions thus settled is deprecated as dangerous to our peace; and all efforts to continue or renew such agitation will be discountenanced.

After adopting these resolutions, the convention proceeded to vote for a candidate for president, and continued to ballot until Monday, the fifth day of the session. There were two hundred and ninety-six electoral votes represented by delegates from the various thirty-one states, making one hundred and forty-nine essential to a choice. Upon the first ballot, Millard Fillmore (president) received 133, General Winfield Scott 131, and Daniel Webster 29 votes; and this relative proportion was nearly sustained throughout fifty ballotings. The votes for General Scott were principally from the northern or non-slaveholding states, as were those given to Mr. Webster; while Mr. Fillmore received the votes of the Southern or slaveholding states, with a few scattering votes from the north. Of the votes of the New York delegation, Scott received 25, and Fillmore 9. On the fifty-third ballot, General Scott receiving 159 votes, Mr. Fillmore 112, and Mr. Webster 21, the former was declared to have been duly nominated, and that nomination was made unanimous. William A. Graham, of North Carolina, then secretary of the navy, was then, on the second ballot, nominated as the Whig candidate for vice-president. Resolutions were adopted complimentary to Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Webster; after which the convention adjourned. Those who opposed the nomination of General Scott, opposed him, not because he had ever shown himself hostile to the Union or the compromise measures of 1850, but simply because, in the then impending crisis, it was better to adopt a candidate whose soundness could not be by any possibility assailed, than to select one against whom the attacks of their political opponents could be more easily directed. It was known that the principal supporters of the nomination of Scott were among the free-soil whigs, or those who had been most strenuous in opposing the extension of slavery. This rendered him unpopular with the southern whigs as a presidential candidate, and they were anxious for the nomination of President Fillmore, who had approved and sustained the compromise measures in 1850. A letter from General Scott was read before the convention, warmly accepting the resolutions which they had adopted, and this had a tendency to remove the repugnance felt against his nomination, which was finally effected by votes given by delegates from Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, in addition to his previous support in the convention. In reply to a communication from the president of the convention, apprising him of his nomination, General Scott wrote a letter on the 24th of June, declaring that he "accepted it with the resolutions annexed." In the same letter he gave his views of public policy, which proved generally acceptable to the whig party throughout the Union. Mr. Graham also accepted his nomination, with a cordial approval of the declarations made in the resolutions adopted by the convention, and soon after resigned his office as secretary of the navy.

After the adjournment of the whig convention, a letter from President Fillmore, addressed to that body, was published. It was intrusted to the care of Mr. Babcock, the delegate from the Erie (New York) district, in which Mr. Fillmore had resided; and he was authorized to present it, and withdraw Mr. Fillmore's name as a candidate, whenever he should think it proper to do so. In this letter, Mr. Fillmore refers to the circumstances ef embarrassment under which he entered upon the duties of the presidency, and says that he at once determined within himself to decline a re-election, and to make that decision public. From doing so, however, he was at that time, as well as subsequently, dissuaded by the earnest remonstrances of his friends. He expresses the hope that the convention may be able to unite in nominating some one who, if elected, may be more successful than he had been in retaining the confidence of the party. He had endeavored faithfully to discharge his duty to the country; and in the consciousness of having acted from upright motives, and, according to his best judgment, for the public good, he was quite willing to have sacrificed himself for the sake of his country.

Mr. Webster did not cordially acquiesce in the nomination of General Scott, and he hesitated not to express his dissatisfaction at the result of the proceedings of the whig convention. From his own calculation of the position of parties in the convention, and the confidence he entertained of the opinion of sanguine friends with regard to his favorable prospects, added to the nominations he had received in Massachusetts and other New England states, as well as in New York, he was induced to believe that the whig nomination for president would fall on him. Efforts were made to place him in nomination as an independent candidate for the presidency, by public meetings in Boston, and by conventions of the whigs in Georgia, and of the Native American party at Trenton, New Jersey. In July, Mr. Webster visited Massachusetts, and was honored with a public reception at Boston, when the demonstration was large and enthusiastic. The inhabitants of Marshfield, the country residence of Mr. Webster, also gave him a public reception, marked by warm enthusiasm and profound personal respect. His health at that time was feeble, and he retired from the cares of office to his residence at Marshfield; and, soon after, he met with a severe injury in consequence of being thrown from a wagon. His health continued to decline, until, on the 21st of October, his illness was felt to be dangerous; from which time he rapidly sunk, until his death, which occurred on Sunday morning, October 24, 1852. His last hours were irradiated by penitence, prayer, and the consolations of Christian faith and hope. His decease excited feelings of profound regret throughout the Union; and, in all sections of the country, funeral honors and demonstrations of respect were paid to his memory. Mr. Webster was considered by his countrymen, and by the well-informed citizens of other countries, as the greatest man, intellectually, that America has yet produced. In the language of one of his biographers (Professor Felton, of Cambridge, Massachusetts): "If we compare Mr. Webster with the great statesmen of antiquity, we shall find many points in common between him and Cicero and Demosthenes. He had, however, more force and originality than the former, and more varied culture than the latter. To our apprehension, he more resembled Demosthenes than any other modern orator. The purity of his conduct in the administration of public affairs, the ardor of his patriotism, the splendor of his genius, have been only the more conspicuous the more his life and works have been studied; for every word he ever spoke breathed a single-hearted devotion to the interests and glory of his country. His language was grand, yet simple, rich, solemn; not disdaining ornament, but never seeking it at the sacrifice of sense; sweet and stately, as well as forcible. His arrangement of topics was skilful, but natural; and the array of his arguments, in solid phalanx, was irresistible. It is one of the chiefest glories of republican Athens that her institutions produced such a man; it is a blot on the history of disunited Greece, that she listened to his words, but forgot to act upon his counsels. May the parallel stop short of this crowning circumstance of ruin and disaster!"

A national convention of the free-soil, or anti-slavery party, calling themselves "free democrats," was held at Pittsburgh, on the 11th of August, at which John P. Hale was nominated for president, and George W. Julian, of Indiana, for vice-president, as the candidates of that party. Both of these gentlemen accepted the nomination, and, during a portion of the month of September, Mr. Hale visited different parts of the state of Ohio and addressed the citizens. The National Liberty convention, composed of a portion of the abolitionists or anti-slavery men, met at Syracuse, New York, on the 30th of September, and nominated William Goodell for president, and S. M. Piper for vice-president. In Georgia, the committee appointed by the southern-rights convention made a report nominating George M. Troup, of Georgia, for president, and General Quitman, of Mississippi, for vice-president. The nominations were ratified with enthusiasm. Electors were named, and the convention adjourned, but the candidates did not accept the nomination.

General Scott, having been called to the west on official business connected with the interests of the army, received an enthusiastic welcome along the route. Public receptions were accorded him at various western cities, and in reply to numerous addresses, principally relating to his military services, the general made brief responses. The democratic candidate for president remained at his residence in Concord, New Hampshire, during the political campaign. In reply to the committee of the democratic national convention, appointed to apprise him of his nomination, General Pierce replied in a letter dated at Concord, June 17 Among other things, he said: "The surprise with which I received the intelligence of the nomination was not unmingled with painful solicitude; and yet it is proper for me to say, that the manner in which it was conferred was peculiarly gratifying. I accept the nomination, relying upon an abiding devotion to the interests, the honor, and the glory of our whole country, but, beyond and above all, upon a Power superior to all human might — a Power which, from the first gun of the Revolution, in every crisis through which we have passed, in every hour of acknowledged peril, when the dark clouds have shut down around us, has interposed as if to baffle human wisdom, outmarch human forecast, and bring out of darkness the rainbow of promise. Weak myself, faith and hope repose there in security.

"I accept the nomination upon the platform adopted by the convention — not because this is expected of me as a candidate, but because the principles it embraces command the approbation of my judgment; and with them, I believe I can safely say, there has been no word nor act of my life in conflict."

The presidential election took place throughout the Union on Tuesday, the 5th of November, 1852, and resulted in the choice of the democratic candidates, Franklin Pierce, for president, and William R. King for vice-president, each of whom received the electoral votes of twenty-seven states — two hundred and fifty-four in number. The whig candidates, Scott and Graham, received the electoral votes of only four states, viz., those of Vermont, Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Tennessee — forty-two in all. The popular vote given to General Scott was, however, larger than had ever been polled by the whig party, the votes for the Scott and Graham electoral tickets in all the states having been 1,384,577; whereas General Taylor, in 1848, received 1,362,242, and Henry Clay, in 1844, 1,291,643. The popular vote for the democratic candidates, Pierce and King, was 1,587,256, exclusive of South Carolina, where the electors were chosen by the legislature. The free-soil and other electoral tickets nominated, did not receive enough of the popular votes to affect the result of the election. The popular vote for the Hale and Julian electoral tickets was 157,296. In 1848, the same party polled for Van Buren and Adams electors, 291,378; but that vote included many democrats who now supported Pierce and King electors.

On the death of Mr. Webster, President Fillmore appointed Edward Everett secretary of state. Other changes in the cabinet had previously taken place. Judge Conkling, of New York, having been appointed minister to Mexico, resigned his office as judge of the northern district of New York, and Nathan K. Hall, postmaster-general, was appointed in his place. Samuel D. Hubbard, of Connecticut, was appointed postmaster-general, Mr. Hall having resigned. In consequence of his nomination as a candidate for vice-president, William A. Graham resigned as secretary of the navy, and John P. Kennedy, of Maryland, was appointed to succeed him.

The second session of the thirty-second Congress commenced on Monday, the 6th of December, 1852, and its term expired on the 3d of March, 1853. There was not much business of importance transacted at this short session, much of the time of which was spent in debates of a political character, principally relating to the acts of the outgoing administration, and the return of the democratic party to power, in the advent of the newly-elected president. A bill was passed erecting a new territorial government out of the northern part of Oregon, to be called the territory of Washington; to the general appropriation bill an amendment was added, authorizing the president to employ engineers to make explorations, in order to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad, and appropriating one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the expenses of the survey. A great variety of private bills, and many acts of local interest, were passed; but most of the measures of general public importance which were proposed at this session failed of success. On the 20th of December, 1852, William R. King, on account of ill health, resigned as president *pro tem.* of the senate, and David R. Atchison, of Missouri, was elected in his place.

The administration of President Fillmore, which may be regarded as a continuation of that of General Taylor, closed on the 4th of March, 1853. It was in some respects different in its character from that of General Taylor, inasmuch as Mr. Fillmore reorganized his cabinet, composed of men of somewhat different views from their predecessors, and his appointments to office were free from some of the influences which had surrounded Taylor and his cabinet. The adoption of the compromise measures of 1850, and their sanction by Mr. Fillmore and his cabinet on a plan varying from that proposed by General Taylor, had the effect to alienate the feelings of many of the whigs of the north toward the administration of Mr. Fillmore. Although the measures of domestic and foreign policy recommended by him were approved, there was nothing in the character or disposition of Mr. Fillmore to excite enthusiasm in his behalf, and the northern whigs generally were displeased with the attempts to place him in nomination for re-election, when public opinion in the whig states had been attracted toward General Scott, as an available presidential candidate, in consequence of his brilliant campaigns in Mexico, and his previous military services. The coldness shown by the president and some of his friends toward Kossuth, and other distinguished European exiles, had the effect to alienate the citizens of foreign birth from the whig party, and to accelerate their defeat.

Placed in the minority with regard to its influence in Congress, the administration of Mr. Fillmore was necessarily negative in its character, with the exception of the passage of the compromise measures relative to slavery, and the boundaries on the Mexican frontier and between Texas and the adjacent territories, and the partial restoration of a system of improvement of harbors and rivers, bills for which had been vetoed by democratic presidents. But the intentions and actions of Mr. Fillmore were regarded as honest and statesmanlike, by men of both the leading parties; and during his administration of the government, the country advanced in prosperity and strength, and he retired to private life honored and respected by his countrymen.

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Frank Pierce

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

FRANKLIN PIERCE.

During the period of the war beween the United States and Great Britain, which was declared in 1812 and terminated in 1815, there were in existence, engaged in various occupations and far distant from each other, ten Americans, who were afterward elevated to the presidency of the republic. It is curious to take a retrospective view of the positions in life then occupied by these individuals, of whom, perhaps, only the first two could, at that time, have entertained any reasonable hopes or expectations of reaching the high station to which they were afterward called. James Monroe was then at the head of the department of state at Washington; John Quincy Adams was minister-plenipotentiary to the imperial court of Russia at St. Petersburgh; Jackson a planter of Tennessee, but soon called into the military service of the United States; Van Buren, a resident of Columbia county, New York, had just entered public life as a state senator; Harrison, governor of the territory of Indiana, and a distinguished commander in the army of the northwest: Tyler, a lawyer of Virginia, and member of the legislature of that state; Polk engaged in his studies in Tennessee, and afterward at the university of North Carolina; Taylor, a young officer in the army, actively engaged in the public service in the western wilderness; Fillmore, a youth, at school in western New York; and lastly, Pierce, still younger in years, commencing an academical education in New Hampshire.

Franklin Pierce, the fourteenth president of the United States—on whose accession to that high office, only three of his predecessors survived (viz., Van Buren, Tyler, and Fillmore)—was born at Hillsborough, in the county of the same name, and state of New Hampshire, on the 23d of November, 1804. At that time, the county of Hillsborough was a much more extensive territory than subsequently, when parts of other counties were made up from it, and might reckon among its sons many men memorable in the annals of the country, among whom may be named

General Stark, the hero of Bennington; Daniel Webster, Levi Woodbury; Jeremiah Smith, the eminent jurist and governor; General James Miller, General M'Neil, and Senator Charles G. Atherton.

The family of Pierce is of English origin, and they were among the earliest emigrants to New England. General Benjamin Pierce, the father of Franklin, was one of the early settlers in the town of Hillsborough, and contributed largely to the growth and prosperity of the town and county. He was born in 1757, at Chelmsford, near Lowell, Massachusetts. On the death of his parents, Benjamin Pierce grew up under the care of an uncle, amid such circumstances of simple fare, hard labor, and scanty education, as were the common lot of the family of a New England farmer in those times. In his eighteenth year he left the plough for the battle-scenes of Lexington and Concord, in April, 1775. From that time he never saw his native place for more than seven years. He enlisted in the army, was present at the battle of Bunker hill, and after serving through the whole revolutionary war, and fighting his way upward from the lowest grade, returned at last, a thorough soldier and commander of a company. He was retained in the army as long as that body of veterans had a united existence; and being finally disbanded at West Point, in 1784, was left with no other reward, for nine years of toil and danger, than the nominal amount of his pay in the continental currency, then so depreciated as to be almost worthless. In 1785, being employed as agent to explore a tract of wild land in New Hampshire, he purchased a lot of fifty acres in what is now the town of Hillsborough. In the spring of the succeeding year, he built himself a log hut, and began the clearing and cultivation of his tract. In 1877, he married his first wife, Elizabeth Andrews, who died within a year after their union, leaving a daughter, the present widow of General John M'Neil. In 1789, he married Anna Kendrick, with whom he lived about half a century, and who bore him eight children, of whom Franklin was the sixth.*

While gaining his livelihood in the wilderness, Benjamin Pierce was prominent among his fellow-citizens, particularly in military affairs. When the militia of Hillsborough county was first organized, he was appointed brigade-major; and, during the presidency of John Adams, he was offered a high command in the army raised in anticipation of a war with the French republic. Pierce being a democratic republican, and opposed to the administration of Adams and its measures, declined the office, although he acknowledged that the pay would, under other circumstances, be an object to him in his poverty. The same principles marked every public, as well as private act of his life. In his own neighborhood, among those who knew him best, he early gained an influence that continued to increase during the whole of his long life. In

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* We are indebted to Hawthorne's Authentic Life of Franklin Pierce for part of the facts in this sketch.

1789, he was elected to the state legislature, and retained that position for twelve successive years, until chosen a member of the council. During the same period, he was active in his military duties as a field-officer, and finally general, of the militia of the county; and Miller, M'Neil, and others, learned of him, in this capacity, the soldier-like discipline which was afterward displayed on the battle-fields of the northern frontier.

After serving as a member of the governor's council six years, Benjamin Pierce was appointed sheriff of Hillsborough county in 1809, and held the office four years. In subsequent years he occasionally served in the same stations. He was a man of the most humane disposition, and was constantly occupied in plans and acts of benevolence. In 1818, when he was sheriff of Hillsborough, there was considerable excitement in reference to the oppressive laws respecting imprisonment for debt. At that time there were in the jail at Amherst, New Hampshire, three aged prisoners confined for debt, one of whom had been then four years in close custody. One of the first acts of Pierce, on his restoration to the office he had formerly held, was to appoint a day for the release of these prisoners. The people thought the occasion worthy of a public meeting; and on the 20th of November, 1818, they assembled in front of the prison, when Sheriff Pierce, after having opened the doors of the dungeon, addressed his "unfortunate fellow-citizens" in the eloquent accents of humanity, and bade them go forth. He said: "The feelings excited by a view of your situation are inexpressible. That those heads, silvered by age and hardship, and those hearts, throbbing with kindly emotions, should be held for this long period of time by their fellow-citizens, without the imputation of a crime, in a captivity unparalleled even in the annals of the French Bastile, or Algerine slavery, always viewed by us with sentiments of inexpressible horror, is more than my nature is able to endure. To be immured in a dungeon, standing on the very soil of liberty, and in the midst of men boasting its high privileges, is, in my mind, with which the ideas and the value of freedom are closely interwoven, infinitely worse than to be enslaved in a foreign land by enemies and barbarians, from whom nothing better could be expected. But, as an officer of the county, I have a duty to perform. I must either be governed by the law, and suffer you still to remain, the devoted victims of unavoidable misfortune and honest poverty, shut out from the genial light of heaven and the vital air, God's equal gift to all—to endure, perhaps perish under, the privations incident to your situation,—or I must be directed by the powerful impulse of humanity, pay the debt myself, and bid you leave this dreary and gloomy abode. My unfortunate fellow-citizens, my duty to myself will not suffer longer to remain here an old companion-in-arms, who fought for the liberty of which he is deprived, for no crime but that of being poor. My duty to my country, whose honor is deeply implicated by your sufferings—and it is one of my first wishes that it should be untarnished—and my duty to my God, who has put into my power to relieve, iresistibly urge me to the latter course. This, I am sensible, takes from me a large sum of money, however the liberal and generous people among whom it is my happy lot to reside may participate. If not, none but my children will have any right to reproach me; and I am confident they will do no more than say their father was generous to a fault. In this view, go; receive the uncontaminated air, which is diffused abroad for the comfort of man; go to your families and friends, if you have any. Be correct in your habits. Be industrious: and if your tottering and emaciated frames are so far exhausted as to prevent your getting a comfortable support, apply to the good people for relief; and may the best of Heaven's blessings accompany you the remainder of your days."

This act was justly regarded as one of the noblest ever performed by a public man, particularly in the state of public opinion existing at that time and for years afterward, which tolerated the inhuman custom of incarceration for debt—a custom transmitted from a barbarous age, and under the operation of which so many innocent persons have suffered, for no other fault than misfortune. In this country, the poor and decayed veteran of the Revolution, whose best years had been spent in the service of his country, was often confined with felons, and years rolled on, leaving him in hopeless imprisonment. But no age, no condition or sex, was exempt from the operation of laws disgraceful to the times in which they were enacted and executed, and to the people who tolerated their existence. The generous act of Benjamin Pierce had the force of a powerful example, and erected for him an enduring monument in the hearts of the generous and enlightened lovers of humanity.

The history, character, and circumstances of General Benjamin Pierce, though here but briefly sketched, are essential parts of the biography of his son, both as indicating some of the traits which the latter has inherited, and as showing the influences amid which he grew up. At Franklin Pierce's birth, and for many years subsequent, his father was the most active and public-spirited man within his sphere; a most decided democratic republican, and of course a supporter of Jefferson and Madison; a practical farmer, moreover—not rich, but independent—exercising a liberal hospitality, and noted for the kindness and generosity of his character; a man of the people, but whose natural qualities inevitably made him a leader among them. From infancy upward, the boy had before his eyes, as the model on which he might instinctively form himself, one of the best specimens of New England character, developed in a life of simple habits, yet of elevated action; patriotism, such as it had been in revolutionary days, was taught him by his father, as early as his mother taught him religion. He became early imbued, too, with the military spirit which the old soldier had retained from his long service, and which was kept active by the constant alarms and warlike preparations of the first twelve years of the present century. If any man is found, by birth and youthful training, to show himself a brave, faithful, and able citizen of his native country, it is the son of such a father.*

The services of General Sullivan, who was a resident of the state after the American Revolution, were of great value to the militia of New Hampshire; and under his auspices the brigade of Hillsborough county were organized, Benjamin Pierce at first holding the office of brigade-major, as we have stated, and finally rising to that of brigadier-general. At the commencement of the war of 1812, Franklin Pierce was a few months under eight years of age. The old general, his father, sent two of his sons into the army; and, as his eldest daughter was soon afterward married to Major M'Neil, there were few families that had so large a personal stake in the war as that of General Benjamin Pierce. He himself, both in his public capacity as a member of the council, and by his great local influence in his own county, lent a strenuous support to the national administration of Madison. He identified himself with the cause of the country, and not only took a prominent part at all public meetings of the republican or democratic party, but was ever ready for the informal discussion of political affairs at all places of casual resort, where, in accordance with the custom of the time and country, the minds of men were made to operate effectually upon each other. Franklin Pierce was a frequent auditor of these controversies, and listened with interest to the arguments of his father. No mode of education could be conceived better adapted to imbue a youth with the principles and sentiment of democratic institutions; it brought him into the most familiar contact with the popular mind, and made his own mind a part of it.

In 1827, Benjamin Pierce was elected governor of New Hampshire; in 1828 he was a candidate for re-election, but, having taken part in favor of the election of General Jackson to the presidency of the United States, he was defeated, in consequence of the friends of John Quincy Adams being at that time in a majority in New Hampshire. Governor Pierce was, however, re-elected the following year, on the change of the political majorities in the state. After his second term of office had expired, he lived in retirement. He died April 1, 1839, at the advanced age of eighty-one years. The sons of Benjamin Pierce, in the order of their ages, were, Benjamin U., J. Sullivan, Charles S., Franklin, and Henry D. Pierce. Sullivan and Charles died young; Benjamin U., the eldest, was an officer in the army, and rose to the rank of brevet-colonel; he was a brave and accomplished officer and gentleman, and died in 1850. The youngest brother of Franklin Pierce is an intelligent agriculturist, and has several times been elected to the legislature of his native state. The second wife of Governor Pierce, whose maiden-name was Anna

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* Hawthorne.

Kendrick, died two months before her husband. One of her daughters died young, and the remaining two became accomplished women. The eldest married General Solomon M'Neil, of New Hampshire; the youngest became the wife of Hugh Lawrence, Esq., of Boston. They both died in the year 1837, leaving families. The only surviving sister of the president is the widow of General John M'Neil, and the daughter of Governor Benjamin Pierce by Elizabeth Andrews, his first wife.*

The father of Franklin Pierce had felt, through life, the disadvantages of a defective education; and he determined to afford his son all the opportunities of improvement which he himself had wanted. Franklin, accordingly, was sent to the academy in the neighboring town of Hancock, and afterward to that of Francestown, where he was received into the family of Peter Woodbury, father of the late Judge Levi Woodbury. The mother of the judge was a lady of superior mind and attractions, and over Pierce she had a most beneficial influence, as he often afterward acknowledged. In 1820, at the age of sixteen, he became a student of Bowdoin college, at Brunswick, Maine. Pierce's class was small, but composed of individuals, for the most part, well advanced toward maturity, and, having wrought out their own means of education, were little inclined to neglect their opportunities. Their first scholar, the present Professor Stowe, has long since established his rank among the first scholars of the country. It could have been no easy task to hold a successful rivalry with students so much in earnest as were his classmates. During the earlier part of his college course, it may be doubted whether Pierce was distinguished for scholarship. But, for the last two years, he appeared to grow more intent on the business in hand, and, without losing any of his vivacious qualities as a companion, was resolved to gain an honorable elevation in his class. His habits of attention and obedience to college-discipline were of the strictest character; he rose progressively in scholarship, and took a highly creditable degree.†

In the class below Pierce were Jonathan Cilley, afterward a member of Congress from Maine, and who fell in a duel in 1838; Nathaniel Hawthorne, now one of the most accomplished of American prose-writers; and others who have risen to distinction in literature, the learned professions, and politics. One of his classmates was Zenas Caldwell, of Maine, brother of the late Professor Merrit Caldwell, of Dickinson college. He was several years older than Pierce, and died the year after leaving college. He was a member of the methodist persuasion; a pure-minded, studious, devoutly religious character; endowed with the authority of a grave and sagacious turn of mind. The friendship between Pierce and him was strong, and was of itself (says Hawthorne) a pledge of correct deportment in the former. Under Caldwell's influence, Pierce became deeply impressed with the truths of religion, and sympathized

* Bartlett's Life of Pierce.

† Hawthorne.

with the methodists. When his collegiate course was about half finished, young Caldwell persuaded him to accompany him to his home, in Hebron, Maine. It was in the winter, and the common district-school in Hebron was without a teacher, and the brothers Caldwell influenced him to assume the dignities of a teacher's life. He received fourteen dollars per month for his services, at that time and place reckoned very high wages. After three months within the walls of a country-schoolhouse, Pierce bade them farewell, that he might again pursue his collegiate course.*

After graduating, in 1824, Pierce left Bowdoin college, and returned to his father's house at Hillsborough. Having chosen the law as a profession, so generally considered as the readiest path to distinction and fortune in the United States, he became a student in the office of Judge Woodbury, of Portsmouth. This was at a time when the judge had been elected governor, and, failing of a re-election, had returned to the profession of the law. The last two years of Pierce's preparatory studies were spent at the law-school of Northampton, in Massachusetts, and in the office of Judge Parker, at Amherst, New Hampshire. In 1827, being admitted to the bar, he commenced the practice of his profession at Hillsborough, and the influence which his father possessed gave him a respectable share of business. His distinction at the bar, however, did not immediately follow, nor did he acquire positive eminence in the profession until some years after this period. The enticements of political life — so especially fascinating to a young lawyer, but so irregular in its tendencies, and so inimical to steady professional labor — had begun to operate upon him. His father's prominent political position made it almost impossible that the son should stand aloof. In 1828, the contest for the presidency was fought with a fervor that drew almost everybody into it, and had terminated in the triumph of Andrew Jackson. Franklin Pierce, in advance of his father's decision, though not in opposition to it, had declared himself for Jackson, in preference to Adams for the presidency.†

The town of Hillsborough, in 1829, gave Pierce his first public honor, by electing him, at twenty-five years of age, its representative in the legislature of the state. His whole service in that body comprised four years, in the two latter of which he was chosen speaker of the house. He had all the natural gifts that adapted him for the post — courtesy, firmness, quickness, and accuracy of judgment, and a clearness of mental perception that brought its own regularity into the scene of confused and entangled debate; and to these qualities he added whatever was to be attained by laborious study of parliamentary rules. His merit as a presiding officer was universally acknowledged. It is rare that a man combines so much impulse with so great power of regulating the impulses of himself and others, as Pierce. The faculty here exercised and improved, of controlling an assembly while agitated by tumultuous controversy, was afterward called into play upon a higher field; for, during his Congressional service, Pierce was often summoned to preside in committee of the whole, when a turbulent debate was expected to demand peculiar energy in the chair.*

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* Bartlett.

† Hawthorne.

In 1833, Mr. Pierce was nominated on the Jackson democratic ticket for Congress, and elected one of the five members to which New Hampshire was then entitled in the house of representatives. The members of Congress were at that time, as they had been for many years previous, chosen by general ticket in that state, and of course the delegation were generally all of the same political party. In December, 1833, Pierce, at the age of twenty-nine, took his seat in Congress. His Congressional life, though it made comparatively but little show, was full of labor directed to substantial subjects. He was a member of the judiciary and other important committees; and the drudgery of the committee-room, where so much of the real public business of the country is transacted, fell in large measure to his lot. Thus, even as a legislator, he may be said to have been a man of deeds, not words; and when he spoke upon any subject with which his duty, as chairman or member of a committee, had brought him in relation, his words had the weight of deeds, from the meaning, the directness, and the truth, that he conveyed into them. His intercourse with President Jackson, who was then in his second term of office, was frequent and free, and marked by friendly regard on the part of the latter. The friends of Jackson were in the majority in the house of representatives, and Pierce ranked among the most ardent of the supporters of his administration.

The first speech, of any importance, made by Mr. Pierce in the house of representatives, was delivered February 27, 1834, and was upon the subject of revolutionary claims. It was not marked by any display of attractive eloquence, and was on the unpopular side of the question; for he did not hesitate to express his opposition to the bill, on account of its objectionable features, as he regarded them. "For the committee making the report in favor of the claims (Mr. Pierce said, in concluding his speech) he entertained the highest respect; and he believed that he was no less disposed than they were to grant, to the uttermost farthing, all that was due to Revolutionary officers or their heirs. But, pass this bill, and you will do great injustice to the country: you will make a most exhausting draught upon your treasury, to answer, it may be, some equitable claims, that may as well be liquidated without it; and you will, it is morally certain, be compelled, under it, to acknowledge a vast number which have no foundation in justice—no foundation anywhere, except in lost records and violent presumptions."

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* Hawthorne.

This speech shows the desire of Mr. Pierce to oppose all extravagance in the public expenditures. Through all his speeches there runs the same vein of economy. Though personally liberal, he has always opposed extravagance in public affairs. He was diligent in his Congressional duties; and when any important vote was taken, the name of Pierce, of New Hampshire, is invariably to be found on the records of Congress. Every speech delivered by him, either in the house of representatives, or afterward in the senate, during his congressional career, is of a practical nature; and few or none of the debaters in Congress, of his time, were less addicted to making speeches for political effect at home than Pierce. The popularity he enjoyed in New Hampshire, and the predominance of the democratic party there, rendered unnecessary the usual resorts to keep up a reputation with his constituents, and he preferred practical usefulness to frequent display of his oratorical powers.

He continued in the house of representatives four years, having been re-elected in 1835. It must have been a time of vast intellectual advantage to himself, while his course was unobtrusive. Amid great national affairs, he was acquiring the best of all educations for future eminence. In the midst of statesmen, he grew to be a statesman. Studious, as all his speeches prove him to be, of history, he beheld it demonstrating itself before his eyes. And it was another advantage of his being brought early into the sphere of national interests, and continuing there for a series of years, that it enabled him to overcome any narrow and sectional prejudices. Without loving New England less, he loved the broad area of the country more. He thus retained that equal sentiment of patriotism for the whole land with which his father had imbued him, and which is, perhaps, apt to be impaired in the hearts of those who come late to the national legislature, after long training in the narrower fields of the separate states. His sense of the value of the Union, which had been taught him at the fireside, from earliest infancy, by the stories of patriotic valor that he there heard, was now strengthened by friendly association with its representatives from every quarter.*

During his second term as a member of the house of representatives, Mr. Pierce spoke on the question of the deposite of the public funds in state banks, defending the course of the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Woodbury, against the charge of favoritism in the selection of deposite banks. He also delivered a forcible speech against the bill authorizing appropriations for the military academy at West Point. He was decidedly opposed to that institution, as then and at present organized. Some eleven years afterward, while engaged in the military service in Mexico, he acknowledged himself in the wrong, and bore testimony to the brilliant services which the graduates of the academy, trained to soldiership from boyhood, had rendered to their country.

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* Hawthorne.

It was while he was a member of the House, that Pierce took that stand on the slavery question which he uniformly followed in Congress. He fully recognised, by his votes and by his voice, the rights pledged to the south by the constitution. He voted to sustain the right of petition, when that simple question was presented in 1837; but he was invariably opposed to all agitation upon the subject, and gave his votes to that end. In May, 1836, he voted in favor of resolutions, reported by a select committee, of which he was a member, declaring that Congress has no constitutional authority to interfere with the institution of slavery in any of the states; that Congress ought not to interfere in any way with slavery in the District of Columbia; and that all petitions, resolutions, propositions, or papers, relating to slavery should, without being printed or referred, be laid upon the table, without further action thereon.

In 1837, Mr. Pierce was elected, by a large majority of the legislature of New Hampshire, to the senate of the United States, for a full term of six years, to succeed Isaac Hill, who had been elected governor of the state.* He took his seat at the commencement of the presidency of Mr. Van Buren. At that time the senate presented an array of veteran and eminent statesmen. Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Benton, Silas Wright, Buchanan, and others, before and since distinguished in the councils of the country, were members. The colleague of Pierce was Henry Hubbard. To this dignified body Pierce came as the youngest member of the senate. With his usual tact and sense of propriety, he saw that it was not the time for him to step forward prominently on this highest theatre in the land. There was hardly an avenue to reputation save what was occupied by the leading men of the senate. Modes of public service remained, however, requiring high ability, but with which few men of competent endowment would have been content to occupy themselves. In the more elevated field of the senate, Pierce pursued the same course as while a representative, and with more than equal results. Among other committees, he was a member of that upon revolutionary pensions. Of this subject he made himself thoroughly master, and was recognised by the senate as an unquestionable authority. In 1840, in reference to several bills for the relief of claimants under the pension law, he delivered a speech which illustrates as well the sympathies as the justice of the man — showing how vividly he could feel, and, at the same time, how powerless were his feelings to turn him aside from what he considered the strict line of public integrity. The merits and sacrifices of the men and women of the Revolution he stated in strong terms: but, while expressing his heartfelt recognition of the debt of gratitude due to them, the senator, as on a former occasion while he was a member of the house of representatives, entered into an analysis of the claims presented, and declared them to be void of justice. The mere pecuniary amount saved to the nation by his scrutiny into affairs of this kind, though great, was but a minor consideration. The danger lay, he thought, in establishing a corrupt system, and placing a wrong precedent upon the statute-book. Instances might be adduced, on the other hand, which show him not less scrupulous of the just rights of claimants than careful of the public interests.

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* John Page, appointed by the governor, served for one session, on the resignation of Mr. Hill.

Another subject upon which he came forward was the military, and the natural defences of the country. The records of debates and proceedings in Congress show that Pierce, as a senator, was laborious and unostentatious in the discharge of his duties; reports of committees, brief remarks, and here and there a longer speech, evincing a thorough knowledge of the subject. Not having been written out by himself, however, these speeches, as reported, are no fair specimens of his oratory, except as regards the train of argument and substantial thought; and, adhering very closely to the business in hand, they seldom present passages that could be quoted, without doing injustice to their author. Like the men of the Revolutionary Congress, he speaks with the earnestness of honest conviction, and out of the fervor of his heart, and because the occasion and the deep sense of it constrain him.*

On the 9th of January, 1840, Senator Pierce delivered an able speech in defence of Mr. Van Buren's administration in conducting the war in Florida against the Seminole Indians, under the auspices of Mr. Poinsett, secretary of war. In the course of this speech, he said: —

"The secretary of war had tested the inefficiency of mounted men; they could not operate in that country: the enormous expense of the militia had been abundantly demonstrated, and the total failure of the whole was painfully obvious. Under these circumstances, what were the duties of the head of the department? This is a question which I shall answer only by stating, further, what was his action, and leave the country, to judge of its propriety. When General Jesup was permitted to return to his appropriate staff duties in Washington city, all the troops which could be spared from our exposed and unsettled frontiers in other quarters were left in the territory, under the command of that vigilant, energetic, and able officer, General Taylor. In prosecuting any campaign, it is well known that much must, of necessity, be left to the judgment and military genius of the commander, to be exercised on the spot. In October, 1838, the secretary gave General Taylor general instructions as to the manner in which the succeeding campaign should be conducted. In those instructions, the protection of Middle Florida against the incursions of the Seminoles was made the first object. To attain this, the establishment of an interior and exterior line of posts, to extend across the peninsula from the gulf to the ocean, was recommended. These and various other suggestions of the secretary formed the basis of General Taylor's instructions for that campaign. Unfortunately, the great and first object of the secretary was not secured. In the meantime, the wisdom of Congress interposed. Military operations were suspended, and negotiations substituted in their place, against the known and expressed opinions of the secretary. The result of the negotiation is written in blood. The obligations of the treaty were not regarded for a moment; they were not intended to be observed on the part of the Indians at the time of its execution, as is proved by the burnings, robberies, and murders, that immediately followed—some of them near the oldest town within the limits of the United States (St. Augustine).

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* Hawthorne.

"I believe, with all the difficulties of the case, the secretary has made the best of the means in his power. In considering the measure now proposed, it is material to remember not only the failure of the large armies, with the immense expense incurred, and the disastrous termination of every attempt at negotiation, but also to bear in mind the very important fact that there is no war in the territory, and has been none for a long time, in the proper acceptation of the term. There has been no fighting for more than two years. The Indian force now remaining does not, probably, exceed from three to five hundred men, scattered in small bands over this extended area. That they should be expelled as soon as practicable, by all reasonable means, is universally conceded; but the secretary who would sanction a recommendation to saddle this country with the expenses of an army of twenty, fifteen, or ten thousand men, as has been suggested, to *hunt* these three hundred savages, would not only find little support for his recommendation here, but less before the people, who are wisely and justly jealous of large standing armies. To expel the last vestige of these banditti, and to give peace and security to the whole of that peninsula, must be the work of time. In the meanwhile, the settler in his home, and the shipwrecked mariner upon the coast, must find protection in our arms, and feel that there is security from Indian barbarity. To attain these objects, the instructions already given for the disposition and employment of the force now in Florida, and the means we are considering, are well adapted, and, in my judgment, sanctioned by sound policy, drawn from past experience and present knowledge. By the exertions of General Taylor's force now actively employed, as I notice by a letter of the 11th December, 1839, the settled portions of the territory will soon be relieved from every individual of this murderous race.

"The senator from South Carolina (Mr. Preston), to show what may be done with a competent force in Florida, called the attention of the senate to the expulsion of the formidable banditti from Italy, by the energetic measures of Napoleon; but the gentleman should recollect that the arms of the conqueror, which could easily and effectually beat up the narrow Pontine marshes, could have done nothing in the unexplored impenetrable hammocks and deep morasses of our broad peninsula. I might ask the senator, what was the success of the French army in their own district, La Vendée? Were they equally triumphant there? No, sir. Notwithstanding that peculiar country, of yet more peculiar people, presented a most terrible and sanguinary theatre of war, literally covered with fire and blood, they rose, as it were, from every conquered field with new energy and fresh power of resistance. It became merely a war of devastation. And yet we are informed that the Vendeans resisted this kind of warfare in a manner to render it everlasting. Now, sir, where was the secret spring of power, on the part of these people, to resist this vastly superior numerical force? It was in the country—in its configuration—and in their skill and courage to profit by it.

"Look at the interesting country of Circassia, the fervid patriotism and wild gallantry of whose people are now attracting the attention and wonder of the world. It presents, at this moment, the astonishing spectacle of a free population which has preserved its independence and its individuality in an almost barbarous state, though surrounded by more civilized nations. Russia has exerted its enormous military power to reduce these tribes inhabiting the borders of the Black sea, and the strong defiles and fastnesses of the Caucasian mountains, without ever gaining any considerable advantage.

"I make these references in reply to the senator from South Carolina, remarking, at the same time, that I place no reliance whatever upon the historical authorities introduced in the course of this debate, either for or against this bill. The cases are not parallel. If you will determine what a given force can accomplish, you must take into the calculation the circumstances by which they are to be surrounded, and the obstacles they are to encounter, the topography of the country in which they are to operate, its climate and productions, and the character of the enemy to be subdued. In all these particulars, Florida stands by itself; and a large force having proved unavailing, I am disposed to try a smaller one, to be raised expressly for this service, and the armed settlers."

This speech is interesting, as showing the powers of argument possessed by Mr. Pierce, and the bent of his mind and observation on military affairs—the same disposition which he afterward exemplified in his volunteer services in Mexico.

By the defeat of Mr. Van Buren, in the presidential election of 1840, the administration of the government was transferred to the whigs, which party had also elected a majority of both houses of Congress. An extra session of Congress, summoned by President Harrison a few days before his death, assembled on the 31st May, 1841. At this extra session, it was the purpose of the whig party, under the leadership of Henry Clay, to overthrow the prominent financial measures which the administrations of Jackson and Van Buren had established, and enact their own favorite measures of policy instead. It was a dark period for the democratic party, so long unaccustomed to defeat, and now beholding the prospect of their long contested and established policy apparently about to be swept away. Mr. Nicholson, of Tennessee, remarks: "The power of an organized minority was never more clearly exhibited than in this contest. The democratic senators acted in strict concert, meeting night after night for consultation. In these consultations, no man's voice was heard with more profound respect than that of Franklin Pierce. His counsels were characterized by so thorough a knowledge of human nature, by so much solid common-sense, by such devotion to democratic principles, that, although among the youngest of the senators, it was deemed important that all their conclusions should be submitted to his sanction. When he rose in the senate or in the committee-room, he was heard with the profoundest attention; and he was greeted by the veteran democrats as one of the ablest champions of the party. His speeches during this session will compare with those of any other senator. If it be asked why he did not receive higher distinction, I answer, that such men as Calhoun, Wright, Buchanan, and Woodbury, were the acknowledged leaders of the democracy. The eyes of the nation were on them. The hopes of their party were reposed in them. The brightness of these luminaries was too great to allow the brilliancy of so young a man to attract especial attention."

In the course of this session, Pierce made an eloquent speech in favor of Mr. Buchanan's resolution, calling upon President Tyler to furnish the names of persons removed from office since the accession of the whigs to power, in March, 1841. He said he did not complain that removals had occurred, but he did complain of the hypocrisy of the whig party. "Democratic administrations have turned out political opponents to give place to political friends, and on the single ground that they had the right to prefer their friends to their opponents; but we know that a majority of the subordinate officers in the executive departments at Washington have, during the last twelve years, been opposed to General Jackson's and Mr. Van Buren's administrations. They were faithful and competent officers, I believe; at all events, they were not reached by the spirit of proscription. But whatever was done by the late administration was not done under false pretences. We put forth no canting, hypocritical circulars; we stood before the nation and the world on the naked, unqualified ground that we preferred our friends to our opponents; that to confer place was our privilege, which we *chose* to exercise. I ought not to say we *chose*, sir; for I will say, what those friends best acquainted with me know, that there was nothing in the administration of General Jackson which I so uniformly failed to justify as the removal of one worthy officer to give place to another.

"The senator from North Carolina, in the course of his remarks the other day, asked: 'Do gentlemen expect that their friends are to be retained in office against the will of the nation? Are they so unreasonable as to expect what the circumstances and the necessity of the case forbid?' What our expectations were, is not the question now; but what were your pledges and promises before the people. On a previous occasion, the distinguished senator from Kentucky (Mr. Clay) made a similar remark: 'An ungracious task, but the nation demands it.' Sir, this demand of the nation—this plea of '*state necessity*,' let me tell gentlemen—is as old as the history of wrong and oppression. It has been the standing plea, the never-failing resort of despotism.

"The great Julius found it convenient, when he restored the *dignity* of the Roman senate, but destroyed its independence. It gave countenance to, and justified, all the atrocities of the inquisition in Spain. It forced out the stifled groans that issued from the Black Hole of Calcutta. It was written in tears upon the Bridge of Sighs in Venice, and pointed to those dark recesses upon whose gloomy thresholds there was never seen a returning footprint.

"It was the plea of the austere and ambitious Strafford, in the days of Charles I. It filled the Bastile of France, and lent its sanction to the terrible atrocities perpetrated there. It was this plea that hurried thousands equally unoffending and innocent to the guillotine. It was upon this plea that the greatest of generals—I mean him, the presence of whose very ashes, within the last few months, sufficed to stir the hearts of a continent—it was upon this plea that he abjured the noble wife who had thrown light and gladness around his humbler days, and, by her own lofty energies and high intellect, had encouraged his aspirations. It was upon this plea that he committed that worst and most fatal act of his eventful life. Upon this, too, he drew around his person the imperial purple. It has in all times, and in every age, been the foe of liberty, and the indispensable stay of usurpation.

"When were the chains of despotism ever thrown around the freedom of speech and of the press, but upon this plea of STATE NECESSITY? Let the spirit of Charles X. and of his ministers answer.

"It is cold, selfish, heartless, and has always been regardless of age, sex, condition, services, or any of the incidents of life that appeal to patriotism or humanity. It has afflicted the feeble and dependent wife, for the imaginary faults of her husband. It has stricken down innocence in its beauty, youth in its freshness, manhood in its vigor, and age in its feebleness and decrepitude. Whatever other plea or apology may be set up for the sweeping, ruthless exercise of this civil guillotine at the present day, in the name of LIBERTY let us be spared this fearful one of STATE NECESSITY, in this early age of the republic, upon the floor of the American senate, in the face of a people yet free."

In June, 1842, Mr. Pierce resigned his seat in the United States senate, and retired to private life. He was then only in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and his political prospects had never been brighter at any period of his political career. He could reasonably hope for promotion, yet he calmly resigned his exalted office, and retired with his wife to the shades of Concord, on the banks of the romantic Merrimack. He appeared to be cured of ambition, as, one after another, its objects came to him unsought. His domestic position, likewise, had contributed to direct his tastes and wishes toward the pursuits of private life. In 1834 he had married Jane Means Appleton, a daughter of the Rev. Dr. Appleton, a former president of Bowdoin college. Three sons had been born to him: and, having hitherto been kept poor by his public service, he no doubt became sensible of the expediency of making some provision for the future. Such, it may be presumed, were the considerations that induced his resignation as senator, to the regret of his senatorial associates.

Mr. Pierce had removed from Hillsborough in 1835, and taken up his residence at Concord, the capital of New Hampshire. On his retirement from the senate in 1842, he devoted himself exclusively to his profession, which had been so long interrupted by his necessary absence at Washington, and soon came into a practice worth four or five thousand dollars per annum. The fact of his income is sufficient proof that his talents were held in high esteem by the people of his native state. For three successive years he had little apparent connection with politics, although he was considered the most influential man with his party in the state. In October, 1845, he was offered by Governor Steele the appointment of United States senator, in place of Levi Woodbury, who had resigned in consequence of being appointed a judge of the United States supreme court. This offer Mr. Pierce acknowledged with gratitude, in a letter to the governor, but declined the acceptance of the honor. "My personal wishes and purposes," he remarked, "in 1842, when I resigned a seat in the senate, were, as I supposed, so perfectly understood, that I have not for a moment contemplated a return to public life. Without adverting to other grounds, my business, professional and otherwise, is such that it would be impossible for me to leave the state suddenly, and be absent for months, without sacrificing the interests of those who rely upon my services."

About this time, the president of the United States, John Tyler, offered Mr. Pierce the office of district attorney of New Hampshire, which he accepted, as the duties which belonged properly to it came in the line of his profession. He continued in this office until 1847. A state convention of the democratic party in 1845 nominated him for governor of New Hampshire, but he declined this honor. It was at his option also, in 1846, to accept the highest legal position in the country, setting aside the bench, and the one which, undoubtedly, would most have gratified his professional aspiration. President Polk, with whom he had been associated in Congress, now offered him the office of attorney-general of the United States, which had become vacant by the transfer of John Y. Mason to the navy department, on the appointment of Mr. Bancroft as minister to Great Britain. "In tendering to you this position in my cabinet," writes the president, "I have been governed by the high estimate which I place upon your character and eminent qualifications to fill it." In the letter in which this proposal is declined, among other remarks, Mr. Pierce says: "Although the early years of my manhood were devoted to public life, it was never really suited to my taste. I longed, as I am sure you must often have done, for the quiet and independence that belong only to the private citizen; and now, at forty, I feel that desire stronger than ever. When I resigned my seat in the senate, in 1842, I did it with the fixed purpose never again to be voluntarily separated from my family for any considerable time, except at the call of my country in time of war; and yet this consequence, for the reason before stated (the ill-health of Mrs. Pierce) and on account of climate, would be very likely to result from my acceptance. These are some of the considerations which have influenced my decision. You will, I am sure, appreciate my motives. You will not believe that I have weighed my personal convenience and ease against the public interest, especially as the office is one which, if not sought, would be readily accepted by gentlemen who could bring to your aid attainments and qualifications vastly superior to mine."

It is unquestionable (says Hawthorne) that, at this period, Pierce hoped and expected to spend a life of professional toil in a private station, undistinguished except by the exercise of his great talents in peaceful pursuits. But such was not his destiny. The contingency to which he referred in the above letter, as the sole exception to his purpose of never being separated from his family, was now about to occur. Nor did he fail to comport himself as, not only that intimation, but the whole tenor of his character, gave reason to anticipate.

In 1844, Mr. Pierce had experienced the greatest affliction of his life. In that year died his son, Frank Robert, a little boy of rare beauty and promise, aged four years, and leaving his bereaved father and mother with only one surviving child, a son then of about three years of age, and destined also to be taken from them by death nine years afterward—the last remaining hope of his tender parents.

When the war between the United States and Mexico broke out, it found Franklin Pierce pledged to the service of his country. He showed his readiness to redeem the pledge, by enrolling himself as the earliest volunteer of a company raised in Concord, and went through the regular drill, with his fellow-soldiers, as a private in the ranks. On the passage of the act for the increase of the army, he received the appointment of colonel of the ninth regiment, which was the quota of New England toward the ten regiments that were to be raised: and shortly afterward, in March, 1847, he was commissioned as brigadier-general in the army, his brigade consisting of regiments from the extreme north, the extreme west, and the extreme south of the Union.

There is nothing in any other country (says Hawthorne) similar to what we see in our own, when the blast of the trumpet at once converts men of peaceful pursuits into warriors. Every war in which America has been engaged has done this; the valor that wins our battles is not the trained hardihood of veterans, but a native and spontaneous fire; and there is surely a chivalrous beauty in the devotion of the citizen-soldier to his country's cause, which the man who makes arms his profession, and is but doing his regular business on the field of battle, can not pretend to rival. Taking the Mexican war as a specimen, this peculiar composition of an American army, as well in respect to its officers as its private soldiers, seems to create a spirit of romantic adventure which more than supplies the place of disciplined courage.

On the other hand, there were serious objections entertained by officers of the regular army, and by many other American citizens, to the course of President Polk, in appointing to high offices, in both the regular and volunteer army employed in the Mexican war, political favorites without regard to their military qualifications. The American Whig Review, of November, 1852, on this subject, remarks: —

"But there is a matter in connection with the Mexican war for which we are disposed to hold General Pierce to a serious responsibility. By accepting a commission at the hands of Mr. Polk, he made himself a party to the unparalleled abuse which the latter committed, *flagrante bello*, when he converted appointments to the army into mere *spoils*, and conferred commissions of every grade on partisans and political favorites only, to the great prejudice of the accomplished and gallant officers of the old army, and to the infinite detriment of the public service. He conferred on William O. Butler and Robert Patterson, commissions as majors-general, and on Thomas Marshall, Joseph Lane, and James Shields, as brigadiers — to command the volunteer forces — neither of whom had been educated to the profession of arms; but all of them were obviously political. We believe that it would have been better to have taken for these important situations some of the old army, but are not disposed to make any particular complaint, as the volunteers were in the nature of militia, and perhaps civilians suddenly garnished with epaulettes and swords would do well enough in commanding them. We can not, however, reprehend the conduct of Mr. Polk too much, in proscribing as he did, in this connection, at least one half of the country. Fortunately the volunteers were, by the act of Congress, authorized to designate their own field and company officers, and thus a considerable number of whigs obtained access to the field of battle. As colonels, and in other subordidate situations, they acquitted themselves creditably, and won a higher reputation than Mr. Polk's majors-general and brigadiers.

"But, though the course of Mr. Polk in this respect," continues the Review, "may be entitled to some indulgence, in consideration of the character of the force, yet what are we to think of his conduct on the occasion of the increase of the regular army, by the addition of ten new regiments? It was obvious that he was bound, by every rule of justice and every dictate of propriety, to recognise the claims of men who had consecrated their whole lives to their country—of men who had been present on every battle-field, from the opening of the last war with Great Britain down to that of Mexico? But we are safe, at any rate, in insisting that he should have paid some attention to those who were then in the presence of the enemy, and who had distinguished themselves on the fields of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, and at Monterey. They were, however, all of them remorselessly set aside and passed over. He appointed Pillow and Quitman majors-general, and Pierce, Cadwallader, Cushing, and Price, brigadiers; and thus enabled the two former to command every officer in the regular army, except Majors-General Scott, Gaines, Jesup, and Taylor; and the four latter all of those gallant officers who had obtained imperishable renown, in conflicts with the enemy, from 1811 to 1847. Veterans of great merit, superseded by these political brigadiers, have been from that day to this remonstrating against the indignity offered them by Mr. Polk. And, what is a little curious, these men, so suddenly and so unaccountably elevated above such exalted worth, were all lawyers. Why could not Mr. Polk discover some fitness in other walks of civil life? He should have recollected that Warren, who fell on Bunker hill, and Mercer at Trenton, were both physicians. One would suppose that there might have been found among the millions who handle the plough, or the hammer, at least one individual equal to his democratic lawyers;—or did he suppose that chopping logic in court-houses alone fitted a man for chopping off, *secundem artem*, heads, arms, &c., on battle-fields? Mr. Pierce was a party to the enormous injustice done to the gallant officers of the old army, and to the no less enormous outrage of committing to untried and incompetent hands the safety of our armies and the honor of our flag."

Having accepted a commission tendered him by President Polk, General Pierce, accompanied by Colonel Ransom, proceeded to Boston, to await the work of preparation for embarking the troops for Mexico. He sailed from Newport on the 27th of May, 1847, in the bark Kepler, having on board three companies of the ninth regiment of infantry, together with Colonel Ransom, its commander, and the officers belonging to the detachment. The passage was long and tedious, with protracted calms, and so smooth a sea that a sail-boat might have performed the voyage in safety. The Kepler arrived at Vera Cruz in precisely a month after her departure from the United States, without speaking a single vessel from the south during her passage, and of course receiving no intelligence as to the position and state of the army which these reinforcements were to join. At Vera Cruz, the troops under Pierce encountered pestilence and disease, and the general himself was taken very ill. He soon recovered, and, with but a small loss, left Vera Cruz in the middle of the month of July for the interior of Mexico. The whole force under his command consisted of about twenty-four hundred men. His line of march was a most harassing one, beset on all sides by Mexican soldiers and guerilla bands, whose object was to intercept all recruits on their march to succor General Scott. The great object of Pierce was, not to give battle, but to avoid it—to present General Scott with the greatest possible number of healthy soldiers, within the smallest space of time. Fifteen miles from Vera Cruz, the courage and decision of General Pierce were put to trial. He was there attacked by a fierce guerilla party, and gave an order to charge upon the chapparal. The enemy was completely routed, after some severe fighting. At the national bridge he was again attacked by the guerillas, who barricaded the bridge. He ordered Captain Dupreau to dash over the barricade and charge the enemy. The order was promptly executed, and with success. In this skirmish, General Pierce had a narrow escape, having received an escopette ball through the rim of his hat, but without other damage than leaving his head, for a short time, without protection from the sun. "The balls," says Pierce, in his private journal, "spattered like hailstones around us, at the moment the column advanced; and it seems truly wonderful that so few took effect."

On the 1st of August, General Pierce was at Perote, and advised General Scott of the state of his command, as follows: "I shall bring to your command about twenty-four hundred of all arms. To-morrow morning, at four o'clock, I shall leave here for Puebla, and shall make the march in four days."

The men under his care were principally northern recruits: they had suffered much by disease; had been attacked five times by guerilla parties; and yet General Pierce had lost scarcely a man, though in the heart of an enemy's country. On the 6th of August, 1847, he joined General Scott at Puebla, with his command in excellent condition.*

General Pierce kept a journal, for the perusal of his family and friends, which he continued up to the 1st of August. In its clear and simple narrative (says Hawthorne) the reader can not fail to see—although it was written with no purpose of displaying them—the native qualities of a born soldier, together with the sagacity of an experienced one. He had proved himself, moreover, physically apt for war, by his easy endurance of the fatigues of the march. Nature, indeed, has endowed him with a rare elasticity of both mind and body. After the severest toil, a single night's rest does as much for him, in the way of refreshment, as a week could do for most other men.

* Bartlett.

General Scott, who was at Puebla, with the main army, awaiting this reinforcement, began his march toward the city of Mexico on the day after General Pierce's arrival. The battle of Contreras was fought on the 19th of August. In this action, the Mexican force consisted of about seven thousand men, posted in a strongly-entrenched camp under General Valencia. A portion of the American forces were ordered to move against Valencia's left flank, while a vigorous assault was made upon his front; and General Pierce's brigade formed a part of the force engaged in this latter movement, in which four thousand newly-recruited men, unable to bring their artillery to bear, contended against seven thousand disciplined soldiers, protected by intrenchments, and showering round-shot and shells against the assailing troops. In the midst of the fire of the enemy, Pierce, advancing at the head of the column and encouraging his troops, was severely injured by the fall of his horse, occasioned by the animal thrusting his foot into a crevice among the rocks, breaking his own leg, and crushing his rider heavily beneath him. He suffered great pain, but was assisted to mount another horse, and remained in the saddle until eleven o'clock at night, when beneath a torrent of rain, destitute of a tent or other protection, without food or refreshment, he stretched himself upon an ammunition wagon, where he lay, prevented by pain from finding repose. At early dawn he was again in the saddle, at the head of his brigade, which had taken its former position in front of the enemy. Soon after, the Mexican camp was stormed, and in the short space of seventeen minutes it had fallen into the hands of the assailants, together with a multitude of prisoners. The remnant of the routed enemy fled toward Churubusco, Pierce leading his brigade in pursuit, over ground strewn with the dead and dying. The pursuit was continued until past noon, Santa Anna's army having made a stand at the strong positions of Churubusco and San Antonio, where the great conflict of the day commenced. Pierce's brigade was ordered to pursue a route by which the enemy could be attacked in the rear. Against the remonstrance of General Scott, who considered him too much injured to remain on the field, Pierce advanced at the head of his brigade, and the troops were soon under fire. When the brigade had advanced about a mile, its march was impeded by a wide and deep ditch. It being impossible to leap it, General Pierce was lifted from his saddle, and, hurt as he was, contrived to wade or scramble across this obstacle, leaving his horse on the other side. In the excitement of the battle he forgot his injury, and hurried forward, leading the brigade, a distance of two or three hundred yards. But, in consequence of the exhaustion of his frame and the anguish of his injured knee, he fell, faint and almost insensible, within full range of the enemy's fire. He refused to be borne from the field, and there he lay, under the tremendous fire of Churubusco, until the enemy was routed and the contest ended.

Immediately after this victory, Santa Anna sent a flag of truce proposing an armistice, with a view to negotiations for peace; and General Pierce was appointed by the commander-in-chief one of the commissioners to arrange the terms of this armistice, Generals Quitman and Percifer F. Smith being his colleagues in the commission. Pierce was unable to walk or to mount his horse without assistance, when the intelligence of his appointment reached him. He immediately obeyed the summons, was assisted into the saddle, and rode to Tacubaya, where, at the house of the British consul general, the American and Mexican commissioners were assembled. The conference began late in the afternoon and continued until four o'clock the next morning, when the articles were signed. Pierce then proceeded to the quarters of General Worth, where he obtained a short repose.

The armistice was of short duration. Military operations, after a temporary interruption, were actively renewed; and on the 8th of September was fought the bloody battle of Molino del Rey, one of the fiercest and most destructive of the war. General Pierce, with his brigade, participated in that battle, as well as that of Chepultepec, which was fought on the 13th of September. On the preceding day, although greatly enfeebled from previous marches and battles, General Pierce had acted with his brigade. In obedience to orders, it had occupied the field of Molina del Rey. Contrary to expectation, it was found that the enemy's force had been withdrawn from this position. Pierce remained in the field until noon, when, it being certain that the anticipated attack would not take place before the following day, he returned to the quarters of General Worth. There he became extremely ill, and was unable to leave his bed for thirty-six hours. In the meantime, the castle of Chepultepec was stormed by the troops under Generals Pillow and Quitman. Pierce's brigade behaved itself gallantly and suffered severely; and that accomplished officer Colonel Ransom, leading the ninth, or New England regiment, to the attack, was shot through the head, and fell with many other brave men, in that last battle of the war. The campaign closed with Chepultepec. The Mexicans had abandoned their capital. The victorious Americans took possession, and their flag waved over the "halls of the Montezumas," which had seen no conquering foe since the Spaniards under Cortez had taken possession more than three centuries before.

General Pierce remained in Mexico until December, 1847, when, as the warfare was over and peace about being concluded, he set out on his return home. In nine months, crowded full of incident, he had seen far more of actual service than many professional soldiers during their whole lives. As soon as the treaty of peace was signed, he gave up his commission, and returned to the practice of the law, again proposing to spend the remainder of his days in the bosom of his family. All the dreams of his youth were now fulfilled; the military ardor that had struck an hereditary root in his breast had enjoyed its scope and was satisfied;

and he flattered himself that no circumstances could hereafter occur to draw him from the retirement of domestic peace. New Hampshire received him with pride and honor, and even with more enthusiastic affection than ever. At his departure he had received a splendid sword at the hands of many of his friends, in token of their confidence; he had shown himself well worthy to wear, and able to use, a soldier's weapon; and his native state now gave him another, the testimonial of approved valor and warlike conduct.*

The intervening years from his return from Mexico to his election to the presidency, were spent by General Pierce in close attention to his profession as a lawyer — an employment scarcely varied or interrupted except by those episodes of political activity in which he felt compelled to engage. In the presidential canvass of 1848, he used his best efforts in behalf of the candidate of his party, General Cass. When the series of measures known under the collective term of the compromise were passed by Congress in 1850, General Pierce gave them his decided approval, as a settlement of the agitated questions regarding slavery. On previous occasions, however, he had expressed opinions adverse to the extension of slavery; and at a public meeting at Concord, on the 5th of June, 1845, in a speech in reply to John P. Hale, Mr. Pierce said (as reported in the New Hampshire Patriot of June 12, 1845): —

" He had only to say now, what he had always said, that he regarded slavery as one of the greatest moral and social evils — a curse upon the whole country, and this he believed to be the sentiment of all men, of all parties, at the North. He was free to admit that he had himself approached this subject of annexation [of Texas] with all his prejudices and prepossessions against it, and on one ground alone — its slavery feature. His convictions on this subject were, as had been stated, strong; not the result of any new light, but deeply fixed and abiding. The only difficulty in his mind ever had been that of a recognition, by any new act of our government, of the institution of domestic slavery; and he had found it extremely difficult to bring his mind to a condition impartially to weigh the argument for and against the measure."

Some years subsequently, in the New Hampshire constitutional convention, on the 1st January, 1851, General Pierce remarked: "I would take the ground of the non-extension of slavery — that slavery should not become stronger. But Congress have only re-enacted the old law of 1793. Union-loving men, desiring peace and loving their country, conceded that point, unwillingly conceded it, and planting themselves upon this law against the outburst of popular feeling, resisted the agitation which is assaulting all who stand up for their country. But the gentleman says that the law is obnoxious! What single thing is there connected with slavery that is not obnoxious? Even the gentleman from

* Hawthorne.

Marlborough [Dr. Batcheler, an ultra abolitionist] can not feel more deeply than I do on this subject," &c.

In the autumn of 1850, in pursuance of a vote of the people, a convention assembled at Concord for the revision of the constitution of New Hampshire. General Pierce was elected its president by an almost unanimous vote, in a body which included Judge Woodbury and other of the most eminent citizens of the state. His conduct as presiding officer was satisfactory to all parties. The amendments proposed by the convention were numerous, and were all rejected by the people.

On the 19th of June, 1852, the democratic national convention assembled at Baltimore, for the nomination of candidates for president and vice-president of the United States. In the previous January, the democratic state convention of New Hampshire had signified their preference for Franklin Pierce as the presidential candidate — a demonstration which drew from him a response addressed to his friend, Mr. Atherton. We make the following extract: —

"To these my sincere and grateful acknowledgments, I desire to add, the same motives which induced me several years ago to retire from public life, and which since that time controlled my judgment in this respect, now impel me to say, that the use of my name, in any event, before the democratic national convention at Baltimore, to which you are a delegate, would be utterly repugnant to my taste and wishes."

Notwithstanding this letter, it is believed that the New Hampshire delegates to the convention, particularly Charles G. Atherton and Edmund Burke, were determined to avail themselves of any favorable opportunity which might occur, in the expected non-agreement of the convention on a candidate, to endeavor to effect the nomination of General Pierce. The opportunity was presented.

The convention continued its sessions during four days. Thirty-five ballotings were held, with a continually-decreasing prospect that the friends of any one of the gentlemen hitherto prominent before the people would succeed in obtaining the two-thirds vote that was requisite for a nomination.

For ten successive ballottings after General Pierce's name had been brought forward on the thirty-fifth ballot, when he received fifteen votes, the whole number given to him failed to exceed thirty votes at any one time, as Virginia, Maine, and New Hampshire, had voted for him. On the forty-eighth ballot he received fifty-five votes; and on the forty-ninth and final ballot, North Carolina had determined to cast her vote for Pierce, and James C. Dobbins, one of her delegates, was about to give it. He made a most eloquent speech at the moment, which had a powerful influence on the convention, and led to Pierce's nomination. He received two hundred and eighty-two votes, against eleven for all others, and was declared the nominee of the convention. Quickly as the lightning-flash could blazon it abroad (says Hawthorne), his name was on every tongue from end to end of this vast country. Within an hour he grew to be illustrious.

The presidential election of November, 1852, did not turn upon the personal popularity of the candidates. General Pierce received the united vote of the democratic party throughout the nation, in addition, as was supposed, to the votes of fifty thousand whigs who were dissatisfied with the nomination of General Scott. Of the votes of the electoral colleges, Pierce received two hundred and fifty-four, and Scott forty-two votes.

In the midst of the congratulations of his countrymen, General Pierce and his wife were plunged into the deepest affliction, by a sad accident which deprived them of their last remaining child. Their son Benjamin was a promising youth in the thirteenth year of his age. He not only had great inclination to study, but was one of those affectionate boys who win the love and esteem of all. If ever child promised to fulfil the expectations of his friends, it was he, whose charming voice and sweet countenance dwell on the memory of all who knew him.

On a winter's morning — the 6th of January, 1853 — the president elect, his wife and son, were seated with a feeling of perfect security, for a short journey on the railroad between Andover and Lawrence, Massachusetts. There was a sound like a peal of thunder. The car was thrown off the track, and dashed against the rocks. Benjamin Pierce was instantly killed, and several other passengers were severely injured. Some died of their wounds. The president elect was childless. The eyes of his dear, his only son, had shut for ever to the light, and the soul had departed. The afflicted parents wept with heartfelt agony. That son, on whom they doated, they were never to see more. Like four of his predecessors in the presidency — Washington, Madison, Jackson, and Polk — General Pierce was destined to enter on the honors of the executive of the nation in the solitude of a childless life.

One of the president's biographers remarks: "And now, in the midst of all his triumphs, the secret sting of sadness remains buried in his heart. Providence has so dispensed the good and the evil of life, that every man, whatever his station or however happy his lot, finds crosses and afflictions which always counterbalance his pleasures. There is no perfect happiness on earth. Prosperity is a dream; glory a mistake; the world a deception, which finds only phantoms, leaving nothing solid in the heart. God alone can comfort our afflictions, and in the meditation of his holy law and submission to his eternal decrees do the bereaved parents seek those consolations which they have never found in the world, and which, while softening their afflictions here below, will secure to them their immortal reward hereafter."

General Pierce and his wife have always been regular attendants on divine worship in the congregational church, the lady being a professor of religion. The president was carefully educated in the religious principles which distinguished the first settlers of New England; and in early manhood he became attached to those doctrines in which he was educated.

The personal appearance of General Pierce is elegant and commanding. His height is about five feet ten inches; he is rather slight in figure, and has a very pleasant and impressive address. His eyes are dark, bright, and piercing; his hair dark; his forehead and face fine, open, and frank in their expression.

The votes for president and vice-president having been counted in Congress on the 9th February, and the result declared, a joint committee was appointed to wait upon the president elect and inform him of his election. In his reply to the committee, Mr. Pierce said: "You will please to communicate to the respective houses of Congress my acceptance of the trust confided to me, and at the same time express to them my grateful acknowledgments, and assure them of the deep sense of obligation with which I regard this manifestation on the part of my countrymen. It will be my earnest endeavor to prove that their confidence has not been misplaced."

THE INAUGURATION.

The national ceremony of the inauguration of the president of the United States took place, as usual, at the city of Washington, on Friday, March 4, 1853. A large concourse of strangers as well as citizens were in attendance; and it was estimated that the census of Washington city and Georgetown had been increased, within a week of the time, upward of twenty thousand persons. The country adjacent to the capitol poured in, on the morning of the ceremony, from every point of the compass, until at length there must have been, for a time, approximating seventy or eighty thousand persons within the city limits. At an early hour, drums beat, and music resounded in various parts of the city, to arouse and prepare the people for the pageant of the day. The weather was not pleasant; a raw northeasterly wind, wafting a continuous though fast-melting snow, made its effects felt on all exposed to it: still, it was not forbidding enough to prevent any, but invalids, from participating in the scene in the open air.

The military array was on a scale grander than any that had preceded it in Washington. Besides the United States troops and volunteer regiment of the District of Columbia, several military companies were present from New York, Baltimore, and other places. These, with the other constituent parts of the procession, met on the parade-ground in front of the city-hall, and about noon marched thence to Pennsylvania avenue, to escort FRANKLIN PIERCE, the president elect, from his lodgings, at Willard's hotel, to the capitol.

Arrived at the hotel, the procession was joined by an open barouche, containing President Fillmore and the president elect, and Senators Bright, of Indiana, and Hamlin, of Maine, of the committee of arrangements; the barouche being surrounded by the marshal of the District of Columbia and his aids. First in the procession were the United States artillery and marines, followed by the other military companies; then followed the president's barouche; after which were several fire companies, bands of marine, and democratic associations from various cities. In order to accommodate the people as much as possible, in viewing the ceremony, the large gates of the capitol-yard were closed to carriages. The president's party and the diplomatic corps were admitted by the north-side gate and a covered way to the north door of the capitol. The pedestrian portion of the procession, with the people at large, entered by one of the side gates.

The president, president elect, and committee of arrangements, having arrived in the senate-chamber, after the usual formalities there, they proceeded thence to the platform erected for the occasion, over the steps leading up to the eastern portico. The president elect then stood forward, and, holding up his right hand, took the oath of office, which was administered by the chief-justice of the United States, Roger B. Taney.

President Pierce then delivered his inaugural address, without the use of notes or written paper (in this respect differing from all his predecessors); but with much energy and oratorical action, and with a strong, clear voice, that made itself heard over an area containing about fifteen thousand spectators. The address was commenced at half-past one o'clock, or one hour after the first movement of the procession, and concluded at about two o'clock. It was received with enthusiasm by the immense audience who listened to it.

The artillery announced the conclusion of the address; and the president, escorted by the military and accompanied by Ex-President Fillmore and others, proceeded to the presidential mansion, where the new president received the congratulations of the people as they passed rapidly through the circular room, from the north to the south front of the mansion. Ex-President Fillmore then left the president, and occupied the suite of rooms which had been vacated by Mr. Pierce at Willard's hotel.

The vice-president elect, William R. King, was absent from ill-health, and at the time of the inauguration was sojourning at the island of Cuba, in the West Indies. The oath of office was administered to Mr. King at

Matanzas, by the United States consul, according to a special act of Congress; soon after which, he returned to his residence near Selina, Alabama, where he died.

THE CABINET.

On the 7th of March, President Pierce nominated the following gentlemen to compose his cabinet, and they were forthwith confirmed without opposition by the senate, which was then in session: William L. Marcy, of New York, secretary of state; James Guthrie, of Kentucky, secretary of the treasury; Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, secretary of war; James C. Dobbin, of North Carolina, secretary of the navy; Robert M'Clelland, of Michigan, secretary of the interior; James Campbell, of Pennsylvania, postmaster-general; Caleb Cushing, of Massachusetts, attorney-general.

These heads of departments entered on their duties the following day.

ANALYTICAL INDEX.

Abercrombie, General, appointed Commander-in-Chief, 40.

Acadia restored to France, 28.

Act of British Parliament, the first, for taxing the Colonies, proposed in 1764, 53.
- Stamp, passed, 58; repealed, 70.
- A new one, for taxing the Colonies, passed (1767), 73.
- Establishing a Board of Trade in the Colonies, passed, ib.
- Prohibiting New York Assembly from passing laws, ib.
- Shutting up the port of Boston, 117.
- Altering charter of Massachusetts, ib.
- Providing for sending criminals to England for trial, 112.

Adams, John, declines office under Gov. Bernard, 77; defends the cause of Captain Preston and other soldiers before the court at Boston, 93; appointed Minister to Great Britain, 299; Commissioner to negotiate for peace, 334.

———, ——, (vol. ii.), early life of, and marriage, 92; chosen representative to the Legislature of Massachusetts, 92; his plan for the new State Constitution, 93; appointed minister to Great Britain, 93; elected Vice-President, 94; President of the United States, 95; his death, 97; his administration, 99; the Fifth Congress held at Philadelphia, 101; passage of the alien and sedition laws, 102; protection of American seamen, 103; claims of the United States on France, 105; Gen. Hamilton's censure on, 106; law relating to the Federal judiciary, 107.

———, *John Quincy,* (vol. ii.), his parentage and birth, 256; mission abroad, 259; elected to the Senate, 260; Secretary of State, 262; President, 264; his career in Congress, 266; administration of, 267; controversy with Georgia, 269; proposed Congress of North and South American States, 273; defeat of the bankrupt law, 280; appropriation for the navigation of the Ohio, 280; partisan opposition to the government, 282; new tariff bill, 284; election of Gen. Jackson to the Presidency, 285; Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Co. grant, 286; exploring expedition to the South Seas, 287; appropriation for light-houses, arsenals, armories, 288.

———, *Samuel,* rejects the offers of Governors Bernard and Hutchinson, 77; demands and obtains from the Governor the removal of British troops from Boston, 92.

Administration, British; changes in (1763), 52; (1765), 67; (1766), 72; (1768), 79; (1770), 95; (1783), 333, 334.

Administrations from 1789 to 1855, 550 to 554.

Allen, Ethan, plans an expedition against Ticonderoga, 153; captures that fortress, Crown Point, and Skenesborough, 153–4; attempts to take Montreal, 166; is defeated, taken prisoner, and sent to England in irons, ib.

American Union, documentary history of, 489.

Amherst, General, at Ticonderoga, pursues the French; returns to Crown Point, 42.

André, Major John (Adjutant-General of the British army), negotiates with General Arnold for the surrender of West Point, 300; his interview with Arnold, 303; is arrested on his return to New York, 304; tried and executed as a spy, 307; his unhappy fate lamented, 308; notice of his early life and character, ib.

Armed Neutrality, confederacy so called, formed, 309; parties to, and continuation of, ib.

Army, American, organized by Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, 147; Continental, organized by Congress, 157; Washington appointed Commander-in-Chief, 158; other generals appointed, ib.; march from Morristown, 214; increased number of, ib.; in full possession of New Jersey, 215.

Army, British, dispersed to their homes, 38; British troops introduced into Boston, 76; augmentation of, in America, 141, 159, 175; German troops employed, ib.; arrival of at New York, 192; number and condition of, ib.; land on Long Island, 194; enter city of New York, 198; pass up the East River, 199; number and condition of, 200; pursue the Americans across New Jersey, 201; various operations of, 203, 204, 210–230; number of, embarked at New York for Philadelphia, 215; Northern Division of, under General Burgoyne, account of operations, 221–28; entire surrender and dispersion of, 229; division under Howe at Philadelphia, conduct of, in that city, 245, 246; Gen. Howe succeeded in command by Sir Henry Clinton 245; evacuate Philadelphia, 246; pursued by Americans, ib.; number of, in 1778, 246; after battle of Monmouth, British retreat to New York, greatly reduced in numbers, 248; defence of Rhode Island, 249; conquest of Georgia, 254; stations of, in 1779, 267; operations at the South, ib.; brutal conduct of the soldiers, 271; expedition against Virginia, ib.; defence of Savannah, 278; operations at the South, 288; siege and capture of Charleston and the American army under General Lincoln, 289, 290; operations of, at the South, in 1780, 291–295; in 1781, 315–322; surrender of, at Yorktown, 326; situation of, at the close of the campaign of 1781, 327; evacuate the cities held by them in the United States, 336.

Army, French, arrive in the United States (at Newport), 297; number of, ib.; go into winter quarters, 298; join the Americans, ib.; march for Virginia, 324; action of, at Yorktown, 325; canton at Williamsburg, 327; return to France, 469.

Arnold, Benedict, appointed Colonel in the Provincial Army by Massachusetts, 153; proceeds against Ticonderoga, ib.; co-operates with Ethan Allen in the capture of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Skenesborough, 153, 154; captures an English corvette on Lake Champlain, 154; commands an expedition to Canada, 166; maintains his position near Quebec, 168; American army evacuate Canada, 169; appointed Brigadier-General, 205; commands a squadron on Lake Champlain, ib.; fights a naval battle on the lake, is defeated, 205, 206; his gallant exploits and fight with the English troops under Tryon, ib.; Congress presents him with a horse, ib.; takes command of troops on the Delaware, 214; joins the northern army under Gen. Gates, 225; takes possession of Philadelphia, 246; Washington appoints him Military Governor of Philadelphia, ib.; his marriage and extravagance, ib.; charges against him laid before Congress, 299; his sentence, reprimand, and disaffection, ib.; Washington appoints him commander at West Point, 300; forms a plan to betray his country, by delivering that fortress to the British, ib.; opens negotiations with Sir Henry Clinton, ib.; his interview and conference with Major André, 303; escapes on hearing of the arrest of André, 307; unsuccessful attempt to capture him at New York, ib.; appointed Brig.-Gen. in the British Army, 308; his expedition against Virginia, 313; failure of attempt to capture him and his army in Virginia, 314; destroys much property, and returns to Petersburg, ib.; his forces joined by those of Cornwallis, 322; is sent by Sir H. Clinton on an expedition to Connecticut, burns New London, captures the forts, and returns to New York, 325.

Associations formed in the Colonies against the Stamp Act, 66; against importing British goods, 66, 74; to encourage domestic manufactures, 66, 76.

Barré, Col., opposes the Stamp Act, 57; his portrait, with Conway's, ordered in Boston, 62; predicts the loss of the Colonies to Great Britain (in 1769), 81; advocates repeal of tea duty, 95; opposes bills against Massachusetts, 111, 112; his censure of Lord North, 143.

Barton, Col., captures General Prescott, 216; Congress presents him with a sword, ib.

Battle on the plains of Abraham, 44; of Lexington, 145; effect of, 147; of Bunker Hill, 161; of Long Island, 194; at Harlem heights, 207; of White Plains, 200; of Fort Washington, ib.; of Trenton, 203, 204; of Princeton, 210; of Ridgefield, 213; naval, on Lake Champlain, 205; at Springfield and Somerset, New Jersey, 211; of Brandywine, 217; of Paoli, of Germantown, at Red Bank, of Whitemarsh, 219, 220; of Hubbardton, 222; of Bennington, 224; of the Mohawk, ib.; of Fort Schuyler, 174, 225; battle of Stillwater, ib.; second battle of Stillwater, 227; battle of Monmouth, 247; of Rhode Island, 249; of Savannah, 254; of Port Royal, 268; of Briar Creek, 269; of Stony Point, 274; attack on Savannah, 277; of Monks' Corner, 289; at Santee River, ib.; siege and capture of Charleston and Lincoln's army, 290; battles of Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock, 291; of Sanders' Creek, and death of De Kalb, 292; of the Wateree, 293; of Broad River, 295; of Blackstock, ib.; of Springfield, N. J., 297; of the Cowpens, 315; of Guilford C. H., 318; of Hobkirk's Hill, near Camden, 319; of Eutaw Springs, 321; of Yorktown, 325.

Bernard, Governor, dissolves the Massachusetts Assembly, 75; his removal by the King petitioned for, ib.; introduces British troops into Boston, 76; refuses to convene the Assembly, 77; demands of the Assembly funds to pay British troops, 81; his demand refused, ib.; dissolves the Assembly, ib.; is created a baronet by the King, ib.; returns to England, and is succeeded by Hutchinson, ib.

Board of War instituted, 240; General Gates placed at the head, ib.; plans an expedition to Canada, ib.

Boston, freeholders of, pass votes of thanks to Barré and Conway for their opposition to the Stamp Act, 61, 62; mob and riots on account of the Stamp Act, at, 64; people oppose the payment of duties, 75; petition of people of, rejected in Parliament, 79; the first martyr to the cause of American liberty, 88; massacre of citizens by British troops, ib.; arrest of Capt. Preston, 91; is acquitted, 94; funeral of the citizens killed, 93; troops removed from, ib.; arrival of cargoes of tea at, 103; public meetings and excitement, 104; destruction of tea in the harbor, 105; port bill, passed, 109, 111; Lord North's remarks on the people of, 109; port bill, how received in the Colonies, 116; troops introduced into, by Gen. Gage, 119; port closed, and consequent distress, ib.; fortifications at the Neck commenced by Gen. Gage, 121; blockade of, 148; siege of, by Americans, 180; evacuation of, by the British and Tories, 182; Navy-yard, 652.

Boudinot, Elias, life of, 478.

Boundaries of the United States fixed by the treaty of 1783, 335.

Braddock, General, arrives from Ireland—his authority—his expedition against the French—his death, 35.

Brandywine, battle of, 217.

Breed's Hill occupied and fortified by Americans, 159.

British Commissioners (appointed in 1778), arrive in Philadelphia, and make proposals for peace, which are rejected by Congress, 243; offer bribes to members of Congress, publish addresses to the people, without effect, and return to England, 244.

British Cabinet, changes in, viz.: Grenville, premier, 52; Rockingham, premier, 67; Pitt, Earl of Chatham, forms a cabinet, 72; Duke of Grafton, head of ministry, 79; Lord North, minister, 94; resigns, 333; Rockingham, premier, 334; dies, ib.; Lord Shelburne, premier, ib.

Laws respecting Colonies, 51; Navigation Act, ib.

Manufactures, Americans resolve not to import, 66, 74, 78, 79; manufacturers and others petition Parliament in favor of Colonies, 134.

Parliament, denied in America, 74; proceedings in, against colonies, 79; refuse to repeal the tea duty, 95; action of, on Boston tea riot, 108; debates in, 1776, on employing Germans, 178; vote large supplies for the army, and issue letters of marque, 212; effect of Burgoyne's surrender on, 230; committee appointed to inquire into the state of the nation, ib.; proceedings in, 241; last speech and death of the Earl of Chatham, 243; war with France takes place in consequence of the alliance between France and America, 242; ministers make concessions in favor of America, ib.; commissioners sent to America with proposals for peace, ib.; American independence advocated by the opposition, ib.; proceedings in, on reception of notice of the French treaty with America, 259; reception of the news of the disasters in America (1781), violent debates and censure of minister, 328.

Bunker Hill, battle of, 161.

Burgoyne, Gen., arrives at Boston with the British army, 159; supersedes Gov. Carleton in command of the forces in Canada, 221; plan of his operations, ib.; forces under his command, ib.; list of generals in his army, 222; gives a war-feast to the Indians, and issues a proclamation to the Americans, ib.; captures Ticonderoga, ib.; pursues the Americans to Fort Edward, 222–3; difficulties encountered in his march, ib.; sends a detachment to Bennington, which is defeated by the Americans under General Stark, 224; he crosses the Hudson river, and encamps on the heights of Saratoga, 225; his army is attacked by the Americans, ib.; distressing situation of his troops, ib.; after a second battle he retreats a few miles to the north, 227; has his retreat to Fort Edward cut off, and is compelled to surrender, with his army, to the Americans under Gen. Gates, 228; his letter to Lord George Germaine, ib.; his army retained in America as prisoners until the close of the war, 309.

Burke, Edmund, in the Rockingham cabinet, 67; advocates a repeal of the Stamp Act, 70; describes the Chatham cabinet, 72; denounces the measures of government against the colonies, 78; moves resolutions against measures of ministers, 95; opposes Massachusetts bill, 111; sustains proposition to repeal the tea duty, 113; opposes the Canada bill, 114; offers a plan of conciliation, which is rejected by Parliament, 143; proposes another plan of conciliation, 182; his sarcasm on Lord North, 242.

Burr, Aaron, accompanies Arnold in his expedition to Canada, 168; bears the body of Gen. Montgomery from the field before Quebec, ib.

Camden, S. C., battle near, at Sanders' Creek, and defeat of General Gates, 292; battle near, at Hobkirk's Hill, 319.

Canada, English propose to wrest it from the French, 27; expeditions against it in 1704 and 1707, 28; its subjugation by the British, 46; liberal concessions to the people of, 114; religious division of the population (note), ib.; expedition to, 165; another expedition planned, 240; details of the plan stated, 260; French aid expected, 261; designs of the French exposed by Washington, in a letter to Congress, opposing the enterprise, ib.; scheme abandoned by Congress, ib.

Cape Breton retained by France—its fortifications, 29; restored to France, 30; surrenders to the English, 40.

Capitol, the, at Washington, 686, 688.

Carleton, Sir Guy, governor of Canada, 165; his operations for defence of the province, ib.; retreats down the St. Lawrence to Quebec, 166; narrow escape of, from Arnold's troops, 167; receives reinforcements, and defeats the Americans, 169; is superseded by Gen. Burgoyne, 221; succeeds Sir Henry Clinton in command of the British forces in America, and arrives at New York, 239.

Carr, Dabney, of Virginia, proposes to appoint committees of correspondence in the colonies, 100.

Census (seventh) of the United States, 568.

Champe, Sergeant, his unsuccessful attempt to abduct the traitor Arnold, 307.

Champlain, Lake, operations on, 165, 205; battle on, 206, 207.

Charleston, S. C., summoned to surrender by General Prescott, 270; British troops withdraw from the siege, ib.; siege and capture of, by Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot, 289, 290; British take possession of, ib.

Charlestown (Mass.), burned by the British, 160.

Chatham, Earl of, William Pitt created, 72; cabinet formed by him, ib.; proposes an address to the King to remove the troops from Boston, 138; his remarks on the subject, ib.; presents a bill for settlement of the colonial troubles, which is rejected, 139; submits his plan to Franklin, ib.; his remarks on employing German troops, 212; his remarks on the defeat of Burgoyne's expedition, 230; moves for a cessation of hostilities, ib.; his remarks on American affairs, 241; his last speech in the House of Lords (being against the acknowledgment of American independence), 243; his death, ib.

Cherry Valley, attack upon, by Tories and Indians, 253.

Chronological Table, from 1492 to 1854, 598–608.

Clergy of New England zealous in the cause of independence, 129.

Clinton, General, Sir Henry, arrives at Boston with the army, 159; is at the battle of Bunker Hill, 161; arrives off the coast of Carolina, 184; attacks Fort Moultrie, near Charleston, and is defeated, ib.; joins Howe at New York, 185; is left by Howe in defence of New York, 230; promises to attempt a junction with Burgoyne, who anxiously waits for him, 226; moves from New York up the Hudson, ten days before the surrender of Burgoyne, 230; captures Forts Montgomery and Clinton, 231; leads the British grenadiers to the assault, 232; dismantles the forts, and returns to New York, 233; succeeds General Howe in command of the British army, 245; fights the Americans at Monmouth, 247; retreats to New York, 248; marches for Rhode Island, 249; returns to New York, sends a detachment to the South, 254; captures forts at Verplanck's and Stony Point, 272; concentrates his forces at New York, 277; leaves General Knyphausen in command at New York, disasters of the voyage, 288; recruits at Savannah, ib.; besieges Charleston, ib.; attacks the town from the ships, 289; issues a proclamation, and re-establishes the royal government in South Carolina, 291; leaves Cornwallis in command, and returns to New York, ib.; defeats the Americans under Greene, 297; negotiates with Gen. Arnold for the surrender of West Point, 300; endeavors to save Major André after his capture, 307; sends troops to Virginia, under Generals Arnold and Phillips, 314; his instructions to Lord Cornwallis, 322; receives reinforcements at New York, 324; sends Arnold on an expedition to Connecticut, ib.; sails for Virginia with large reinforcements for Cornwallis, but is too late, and returns to New York, ib.; is succeeded in command by Sir Guy Carleton, 333.

Cockade, adopted by Americans in compliment to the French, 296.

Coinage of the United States, 679, 684.

Colonial Assemblies declare by resolution the exclusive right of the people to tax themselves, 81; deny the right of the King to remove offenders to England for trial, ib.; dissolved by the Governors, ib.

Colonies, concessions to them, 29; prosperity of, 47; public feeling in (1770), 85; sympathy of, with Boston and Massachusetts, 116, 121; popular commotions in, 123; public feeling in, after battle of Lexington, 148.

Commissioner sent by Virginia to confer with the French—delicacy of his duties, 32.

Committee of Correspondence appointed in New York (1764), 62.

Committee of Correspondence recommended in Virginia (1773), 100; invention of, claimed by Massachusetts, ib.; attributed to Dr. Franklin, ib.; beneficial effects of, 101.

Confederation, articles of, considered by Congress, 171; adopted, 232; revisal of, recommended by Congress, 342.

Congress, Senators and Representatives in, 511–537; delegates from Territories to (1847), 537; Senators and Representatives in, from 1847 to 1855, 538–545; sessions of, 546.

Congress of Commissioners, at Albany, in 1754, 34, 504; adopt a plan of general government, rejected by Great Britain and Colonies, 34.

At New York, in 1765, proposed by Committee of New York Assembly, 62; invited by circular of Massachusetts Assembly, ib. and 504.

Meeting of first Colonial (Oct., 1765), 63; list of delegates, 64; proceedings of, ib.

First Continental, at Philadelphia (1774), recommended by Virginia, 117; by Massachusetts, 118; delegates appointed, ib.; meeting of delegates, 125; their character and proceedings, 125, 128; Pitt's opinion of, 126; provide for a new Congress, and adjourn, 129.

Second Continental, meet at Philadelphia, 1775, 154; their proceedings, ib.; organize a Continental army, 157; issue paper money, 157–171; consider a plan for confederation, 171; appoint a committee to prepare Declaration of Independence, 187; same, adopted and signed by members, 188; appoint a committee of conference to meet Lord Howe, 196; unsuccessful result, 197; adjourn to Baltimore, 202; adjourn from Philadelphia to Lancaster, 219; adopt articles of confederation, 234; ratifies treaty with France, 244; issue a proclamation respecting the French treaty, ib.; arrange an expedition against Canada, 240, 260; scheme opposed by Washington, 261; conference with Washington on the subject, and abandonment of the enterprise, 262; party spirit and dissensions in, 283, 289; reception of the news of the victory at Yorktown, 327; members appoint a day for public thanksgiving throughout the Union, ib.; ratify the treaty of peace, 335; impotency of the confederation, 342; pass resolutions recommending a convention to revise the articles of confederation, ib.

Congress, Provincial, formed in Massachusetts, 122; measures adopted by, ib.; formed in other colonies, 131, 149.

Connecticut, people of, oppose Stamp Act, 71; sustains Massachusetts with an army, 147; British expedition to, under Tryon, 212; Danbury burnt, 213; Tryon's second expedition, 268; Fairfield and Norwalk burnt, and property at New Haven destroyed, 267.

Conspiracy, to supersede Washington, 239; of General Arnold, with Sir Henry Clinton, to surrender forts at West Point, 298.

Constitution, formation and adoption of, 343; organization of the government, 344.

Constitutions of the several United States, 570–595; comparative view of, 595.

Continental Army, proposed by John Adams, organized by Congress, 157; Washington appointed Commander-in-Chief, 158; other generals appointed, ib.; deplorable condition of, 172; reinforced and organized, ib.; enter Boston, 182; march to New York, 183; number of at New York, 192; exploits of, at Trenton, 204; at Princeton, 210; destitute condition of, 211; encamp at Morristown, ib.; small-pox breaks out among the troops, 212; inoculation checks its progress, ib.; march from Morristown to Middlebrook, N. J., 214; increased number of, ib.; in full possession of New Jersey, 215; march to Germantown, Penn., and thence to Brandywine, Del., where an action with the British takes place, 217; number of, engaged at Brandywine, 218; retreat to Philadelphia, ib.; abandon Philadelphia, and take post at Pottsgrove, 219; attack the British at Germantown, ib.; go into winter quarters at Valley Forge, 220; their extreme hardships and suffering, 220, 238; operations of the northern division, 239; successful termination of the campaign by the capture of Burgoyne and his army, 228; number of troops at Valley Forge, and in the field, 237, 246; march to New Jersey in pursuit of the British army, 246; attack that army under Generals Clinton and Cornwallis, at Monmouth Court-House, 247; severe contest and retreat of the British army to New York, ib.; Americans cross the Hudson and encamp at White Plains, 248; go into winter quarters at Middlebrook, N. J., ib.; a detachment of, besiege the town of Newport, R. I., 249; various encampments of in winter quarters, 253; recruiting service and bounties, 267; opening of campaign of 1779 at the South, ib.; operations and movements of General Lincoln, 268, 270, 277, 279; storming of Stony Point by Wayne, 274; Sullivan's expedition against the Indians, 278; termination of the campaign of 1779, 282; main division of the army go into winter quarters at Morristown, ib.; other stations, ib.; reinforcements sent to General Lincoln's army at the South, ib.; scarcity of provisions in the main army, ib.; supplies demanded and obtained from New Jersey, 283; operations at the South, 289–295; surrender of General Lincoln's army, at Charleston, 290; defeat of General Gates in Carolina, 292; General Gates superseded in command by General Greene, 295; distress of, at the North, under Washington, ib.; affair at Springfield, N. J., 297; number of, in the campaign of 1780, ib.; revolt of Pennsylvania and New Jersey lines quelled, 312–313; mutineers reject the offers of Sir Henry Clinton, 312; operations at the South, 315–322; junction of the army at the North with the French army, 323; march of the combined armies to Virginia, 324; reinforcement sent to General Greene, and the main body of the American army returns to New Jersey, 327; disbanded on the conclusion of peace, 335; discontent of the soldiers, 336; Newburgh address to, 337; prudence and influence of Washington, 338.

Continental Congress, sessions of, 506; members of, 507.

Continental Money, first issue of, 157; repeated issues of, 266; specimen of bills, 175; great depreciation of in value, 266; efforts of Congress to sustain the credit of, ib.

Convention, held at Albany; adopt a plan of government, its plan rejected by the colonies and the crown, 34; to form a constitution, 342; proceedings of, 343, 489.

Council of Governor of Province at Albany, 38.

Conway, General, opposes the Stamp Act, 61; his portrait ordered for Faneuil Hall, 62; member of the Rockingham Cabinet, 67; advocates repeal of tea duties, 95; moves for an address to the king in favor of peace, 333.

Conway, General (Brigadier in the Continental Army), his conspiracy with Gates and Mifflin against Washington, 239; Inspector-General of the army, 240; writes to Washington, and expresses regret for his conduct, ib.; resigns his commission, and returns to Europe, ib.

Cornwallis, Lord, arrives on the coast of North Carolina with a squadron and troops, 183; commands part of the army at battle of Long Island, 194; leads a British army, and crosses the Hudson river, 200; attacks and carries Fort Lee, ib.; pursues the American army across New Jersey to Trenton, 201; out-generalled by Washington, falls back upon New Brunswick, 210–211; surprises General Lincoln at Boundbrook, N. J., 212; defeats Lord Stirling, 215; defeats Gen. Sullivan at Brandywine, 218; takes the American fort at Red Bank, on the Delaware, 219; at the battle of Monmouth, 247; commands part of the army of the South, and takes Georgetown, South Carolina, 291; Clinton returns to New York, and leaves Cornwallis to succeed him in command at the South, ib.; joins Lord Rawdon, on the approach of the American army under Gen. Gates, and they engage the latter at Sanders' Creek, 292; orders a charge with fixed bayonets, and defeats the Americans, with great slaughter, ib.; sends Colonel Ferguson with a body of loyalists to sweep the country to Virginia, 293; the British troops under Rawdon retire to Camden, takes the field in person, and marches in pursuit of Morgan, 316; follows the American army, commanded by Greene, and engages him at Guilford Court-House, 318; operations in Virginia, 322; encamps at and fortifies Yorktown, ib.; force in Virginia under his command, ib.; is besieged at Yorktown by the combined American and French armies, 325; attempts to retreat—a storm prevents—he surrenders to the allied armies, 326.

Customs, Commissioners of, created by act of Parliament, 73; arrival of, in the colonies, 75; their proceedings in Boston, ib.; opposed by the people, and flee, 76.

Customs, the, 661; collection of the, 665; custom-houses, New York, Philadelphia, &c., 667.

Danbury, Conn., burnt by British troops under Gov. Tryon, 213.

D'Anville, Duke, sent to America with a fleet—his fleet dispersed—return to France, 30.

Deane, Silas, American agent in France, 206; his success there, ib.; is appointed commissioner with Franklin and Arthur Lee, ib.; recalled in consequence of charges against him, 284; returns, and publishes a defence of his conduct, ib.

Declaration of Independence, mentioned by Patrick Henry in 1773, 127; formally adopted at Mecklenburg, N. Carolina, in May, 1775, 149; committee of Congress appointed to prepare one, 187; adopted and signed by Congress, 188; received by the people with enthusiasm, ib.; read to the Continental Army, 191.

D'Estaing, Count, arrives with a French fleet on the American coast, 248; proceeds from the Chesapeake to Sandy Hook, and thence to Rhode Island, 249–250; sails to attack the British fleet under Lord Howe, but a storm prevents an engagement, 249; refuses to co-operate with the American army in the siege of Newport, R. I., and sails to Boston to repair, ib.; is censured by the Americans, 250; defeats the English admiral Byron in the West Indies, and arrives on the coast of Georgia, 277; captures a squadron of four British ships, ib.; lands his forces, and assists General Lincoln and the Americans in storming Savannah, ib.; they are repulsed, and the French retire on board of the fleet, 278; encounters severe storms, and returns to France, ib.; his death, ib.

De Grasse, Count, commands the French fleet in America, 324; informs Washington of his movements, ib.; enters the Chesapeake, 325; assists at the siege of Yorktown, 326; sails for the West Indies, 327.

De Kalb, Baron, commands a body of the American troops, and is killed at the battle of Sanders' Creek, 292.

Delegates to the Convention on the Constitution, 503.

Departments of State, the, 689.

Dickinson, John, writes "Farmers' Letters," 75; draws up instructions to Pennsylvania delegates, 124.

Dieskau, Baron, his march against Fort Edward—his death, 37.

Dunmore, Lord, governor of Virginia; his conduct excites the people against him, 169; his affair with Patrick Henry, ib.; abdicates the government, 170; attempts to regain his power, offers freedom to slaves, attacks and destroys Norfolk, ib.; sails for the West Indies, and joins the main army, ib.

Dwight, Timothy, D. D., of Connecticut, his early views in favor of independence, 185; his prophetic views of the future progress of America in 1775, 186.

English Colonies, their independent character, rivalries between them, 25; propositions for their union, their first union against the French, 26; difficulties with other settlements, and with the Indians, 27; neglected by the home government, 30–47.

Esopus, burnt by the British under Gen. Vaughan, 233.

Exchange of prisoners, general, in 1780, 309.

Expedition, of the French along the Ohio and Mississippi, 31; against French settlements in Nova Scotia, under General Braddock against Fort du Quesne, 36; against Crown Point and Ticonderoga, 37; against Fort Frontenac, its capture by the English, against du Quesne, 41; against Quebec, against Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Niagara, 42.

Fairfield and Norwalk, burned by Gov. Tryon, 273.

Farmers' Letters, written by John Dickinson, 75.

Federal City, the, 685.

Fillmore, Millard (vol. ii.), early career, 595; elected to Congress, 598; succeeded Taylor as President, 603; administration of, 605; new postage law, 609; review of his services, 623.

Finances, American, unfavorable condition of, in 1779, 266; negotiations in Europe, ib.; depreciation of Continental money, ib.; successful operations to raise funds in Europe and America, in 1781, 313.

Flag, American, adopted, 188.

Formation of the Federal Government, 502.

Fortifications of the United States, 618.

Fox, Charles James, opposes Boston port bill, 111; opposes Massachusetts bill, 112; moves a censure of ministers, 140; censures ministers for the mismanagement of American affairs and loss of Burgoyne's army, 230; his sarcasms on ministers, 242.

France, Silas Deane sent by Congress to, as American agent, 206; obtains important aid, ib.; three commissioners appointed by Congress, ib.; treaty of alliance and commerce with, negotiated, 234; aid received by the United States from, 235; happy effects of the capture of Burgoyne on the French government, ib.; effects of the treaty of alliance on public opinion in America, 236; war between France and England, 242; treaty of alliance with, ratified by Congress, 244; sends a fleet of twelve sail of the line to America, 248; concludes a treaty with Spain, 276; doubtful effects of the alliance with, on American affairs, 283; aids the American cause with funds and troops, 296; fleet and army of, arrive in United States, 297.

Franklin, Benj., member of the Albany convention, his plan and its character, 34; examination of, before British House of Commons, 48; appointed agent to England by Pennsylvania, 55; consulted by British ministers, 56; opposes the stamp act, 56–58; his letter to Charles Thomson referred to, 58; invention of committees of correspondence in the colonies attributed to, 58–100; sends to Massachusetts Assembly the letters of Hutchinson and Oliver, 101; presents petition of Massachusetts Assembly for removal of Hutchinson and Oliver before the Privy Council, 102; dismissed from the office of Colonial Postmaster-General, ib.; his efforts to influence the people of England in favor of the colonies, 132; procures petitions to Parliament from English people in favor of Colonies, 134; returns to America, 171; is elected a delegate to Congress from Pennsylvania, ib.; appointed Postmaster-General, ib.; appointed one of the committee to confer with Lord Howe, 196; his conversations with Lord Howe and sister, 197; appointed commissioner to negotiate a treaty of peace, 334.

Fraser, General, defeats the Americans at Hubbardton, 222; is killed at the battle of Stillwater, 227.

French, first settled in Canada, soon after in Florida, claimed jurisdiction on the Ohio and Mississippi, built a chain of forts from Canada to Florida, bribed the Indians, 27; determine to extend their American empire, alliance with the Indians, their active movements in Nova Scotia, 30; claim the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, claim disputed by the English, erect forts south of Lake Erie, 31; deserted by their Indian allies at Fort du Quesne, flight down the Ohio, 41; abandon Ticonderoga, power destroyed west of Montreal, 42; picket-guard captain captured, 44; attempt to recover Quebec, ships destroyed by Colville, Montreal the only possession left them in Canada, 46; influence over the Indians continued, 54; negotiations and treaty with the United States, 235; ship with munitions of war arrives in the United States, ib.; fleet under Count D'Estaing arrives on the coast, 262; French and American officers disagree at Rhode Island, 250; dissatisfaction of the Americans with their French allies, ib.; ambassador in England (De Noailles), his ironical letter to Lord North, 256; fleet and army under D'Estaing assist in the attack on Savannah, 277; are repulsed, and return to France, 278 (*see* D'Estaing); alliance with the United States, doubtful effects of, 283; minister to the United States, M. Gerard arrives, 248; succeeded by M. Luzerne, 283; French fleet and army in aid of America announced by La Fayette to be on the way, 296; fleet with army arrive in United States, 297; army, second division of, destined for America, blockaded at Brest by an English fleet, and non-arrival of, ib.; Admiral Ternay dies at Newport, ib.; army goes into winter quarters, 298; fleet sail to Virginia, are attacked by the British admiral, and return to Newport, 314; fleet under Count de Grasse sail from the West Indies for the Chesapeake, 324; army form a junction on the Hudson river, and march to Virginia, ib.; fleet under De Grasse arrives in the Chesapeake, and lands additional troops, 325; operations of the combined armies, ib.; surrender of Yorktown, 326; fleet sail for the West Indies, and the army is cantoned at Williamsburgh, 327; return to France, 469.

French agent, a mysterious one in America, 1775, 179.

Fuller, Mr., opposes ministerial measures respecting the colonies, 110, 113; moves for repeal of the tea duty, ib.; deserts the ministerial side, and predicts ruinous results from Lord North's measures, ib.

Gage, General, commands the British forces in America, 76; orders troops to Boston, ib.; anecdote of, 86; succeeds Hutchinson as governor of Massachusetts, 115; dissolves General Assembly, 118; denounces the league of patriots, 119; introduces troops into Boston, ib.; fortifies Boston Neck, 121; sends troops to seize military stores at Concord, 144; Provincial Congress of Massachusetts declare him disqualified to act as governor, 148; issues a proclamation offering pardon, &c., 159; directs operations at battle of Bunker Hill, ib.; orders the burning of Charlestown, 160; recalled, and succeeded by Howe, 165.

Gaspee, British revenue schooner, burned near Providence, R. I., 99.

Gates, Horatio, appointed brigadier-general and commander of the American forces in Canada, 205; joins General Washington on the Delaware, 206; appointed to the command of the northern army, 225; is joined by Generals Arnold and Lincoln, 225, 226; his various operations against Burgoyne, ib.; receives offer of capitulation from Burgoyne, and agrees to accept of a surrender of his army—his delicacy and humanity towards the defeated troops, 229; receives the thanks of Congress for himself and army, and a gold medal presented to him by their order, 230; his letter to General Vaughan, 233; sends troops to reinforce General Putnam, ib.; is concerned in a scheme to supersede Washington, 240; placed at the head of the Board of War, ib.; appointed by Congress commander of the army at the South, 292; engages the British army at Sanders' Creek, is defeated with great slaughter, and retreats to Charlotte, and thence to Hillsboro', N. C., 292, 293; incurs reproaches, and a court of inquiry is appointed respecting him, 295; is superseded in command by General Greene, ib.

Georgia falls into the hands of the British, 254.

German troops employed by England, 175; debates in Parliament thereon, 178; emigrants in America, ib.

Germantown, Battle of, 219.

Gibbon (historian), member of the House of Commons, 141; his remarks on American affairs, ib.

Gorham, Nathaniel, life of, 480.

Governors, the royal colonial; their tyrannies, 29; their troubles with the people, and final expulsion or abduction, 170.

Grafton, Duke of, head of the ministry, 79; urges conciliation with the colonies, 173; resigns his seat in the cabinet, and acts with the opposition, ib.; motion for conciliating the colonies, 179.

Greene, Nathaniel, appointed brigadier-general by Congress, 159; at first commands at Long Island, but falling sick, is there succeeded by Sullivan, 194; commands a division of the army at the battle of Trenton, 203; his gallantry at the battle of Brandywine, 218; at the battle of Monmouth, 247; commands part of the expedition to Rhode Island, 249; Washington appoints him to supersede General Gates in the command of the southern army, 295; attacked by Knyphausen, and defeated, in New Jersey, 297; presides at the court-martial in the case of Major André, 307; detaches General Morgan to check the British, 315; joins Morgan, and retreats before Cornwallis, 316; is reinforced at Guilford Court-House, and continues his retreat into Virginia, 317; receives reinforcements, and returns into North Carolina, 318; engages the British under Cornwallis at Guilford Court-House, ib.; pursues Cornwallis towards Wilmington, ib.; is attacked by Lord Rawdon at Hobkirk's Hill, near Camden, 319; capture of several British forts, ib.; besieges Fort Ninety-Six, but is compelled to raise the siege, and retreats across the Saluda river, ib.; attacks the British at Eutaw Springs, and defeats them, 321; close of the campaign in South Carolina, 322; reinforced by a detachment under General St. Clair, 327; sends Wayne with a part of the army into Georgia, 332.

Grenville, George, premier, 52; proposes to tax the colonies, 53; introduces the Stamp Act, 56; his views on taxation of the colonies, 68; opposes the measures against the colonies in 1769, 80; opposes Lord North's proposal to retain the duties on tea, 94.

Grey, General, detached by Sir Henry Clinton on a predatory expedition in New England, 249; his exploits on several of these expeditions, 250.

Griffin, Cyrus, life of, 481.

Hale, Nathan, his enterprise, capture, and death, 198.

Hancock, John, declines a British commission, 77; his sloop *Liberty* seized, 75; appointed President of Congress, 161.

Hancock, John, life of, 475.

Hanson, John, life of, 478.

Harrison, William Henry (vol. ii.), his early life, 417; military engagements with Indians, 419; with Tecumseh, 422–430; his visit to Bogota, 434; elected President, 436; the inauguration and address, 437; his last words, 440; review of his character and services, 442.

Hayne, Colonel, taken prisoner by the British, tried, and executed at Charleston, S. C., 321.

Henry, Patrick, opposes the Stamp Act, 58; resolutions and speech of, 58–61; his predictions respecting the contest with Great Britain and independence of the colonies, 127; vigorous measures proposed by, 151; speech in Provincial Congress, ib.; proscribed by the British government, ib.; originates the phrase "Liberty or death," ib.; his affair with Lord Dunmore, 170.

Herkimer, General, his defeat and death, 224.

Hessian troops employed by England, 175; capture of, at Trenton, 204; cruelty and outrages of, 211; repulsed at Red Bank, 219.

Holland takes sides with the Americans against Great Britain, in 1780, 309; Henry Laurens appointed minister to, ib.; Great Britain declares war against, 310.

Home Department, the, 693.

Howe, General Robert, commands a body of American troops in an expedition against Florida, 253; sickness of his troops, and their retreat, 254; defeated at Savannah (after a desperate contest) by the British, under Campbell and Baird, ib.; commands the post at West Point, 300.

Howe, General Sir William, arrives at Boston with an army, 159; commands British troops at battle of Bunker Hill, 160; succeeds General

Gage in command, 165; proposes to evacuate Boston, 181; evacuates Boston, and sails with the troops for Halifax, 182; arrives off Sandy Hook with an army, 191; takes possession of Staten Island, ib.; lands on Long Island, 193; defeats the Americans, 195; is knighted by the King, ib.; prepares to drive the American army from the city of New York, 197; takes possession of the city, 198; organizes a temporary government, and marches in pursuit of the Americans, 199; his indecision as to the course to adopt, 201; yields to the counsel of Lord Cornwallis, ib.; issues a joint proclamation with his brother, Lord Howe, offering pardon to Americans, 202; his plans for the campaign of 1777, 212; various operations of, ib.; moves from New York to New Brunswick, 214; manœuvres and stratagem of, 215; retires to Staten Island, and evacuates New Jersey, ib.; embarks his troops for Philadelphia, via the Chesapeake, ib.; leaves his troops at Elk river, marches, and defeats the Americans on the Brandywine, 217; enters Philadelphia, 219; pushes forward to Germantown, where he is attacked by Washington, and defeats him, 219; after another action at Whitemarsh, unimportant in its result, he goes into winter quarters at Philadelphia, 220; recalled by his own request, 244; fête given him by his officers at Philadelphia on taking leave, called the Mischianza, 245; departs for England, and is succeeded by Sir H. Clinton, ib.

Howe, Admiral Lord, arrives at Staten Island, in the capacity of British commissioner, 192; his amiable character, 191; his circular letters to Americans, 192; letters to Gen. Washington, 193; his second attempt at pacification, 196; meets committee of Congress, ib.; result of the conference, 197; his conversation with Dr. Franklin, ib.; sails from the Delaware to Sandy Hook, and transports Sir H. Clinton's troops to New York, 248; sails to Newport, R. I., where he meets the French fleet under Count D'Estaing, 249; both fleets put to sea, but a storm prevents an engagement, ib.; is joined by Admiral Byron's fleet, 250; Admiral Gambier takes the command, and Lord Howe returns to England, ib.

Huntington, Samuel, life of, 477.

Hutchinson, lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts, succeeds Bernard as governor, 81; at first refuses, but afterwards consents to the removal of British troops from Boston, 92; his letters to the British government sent by Dr. Franklin to Massachusetts Assembly, 101; acknowledges the letters to be genuine, but confidential, ib.; Assembly petitions for his removal, 102; refuses to remove Chief-Justice Oliver, 115; retires, and is succeeded by Gen. Gage, ib.

Imports and Exports of the United States, 558.

Independence, first dawning of, in America, 52; ideas of, in the colonies, suggested by measures of the British government, 82; gradual approaches to, 124; first idea of, uncertain as to time, ib.; declaration of, mentioned by Patrick Henry, in 1773, 127; declaration of, at Mecklenburg, N. C., in May, 1775, 149; ideas of, among the people of America, 185; Dr. Dwight's early views in favor of, ib.; action by the Continental Congress in favor of, 187; committee appointed to prepare Declaration, ib.; adoption and signing of the Declaration, 186; acknowledgment of, advocated in the British Parliament (in 1778), 242.

Indians, the war of the Five Nations against the French aided by the English, 27; their outrages on the frontiers, their butcheries at Fort Wm. Henry, 39; hostilities with the British Colonies, 54; under French influence, ib.; Six Nations of, join the British, ib.; southern, instigated against Americans by British agents, 206; various tribes of, join General Burgoyne's army, 221; murder of Miss McCrea, 223; allies of General Burgoyne desert the service, 226; barbarities of, on western frontiers, 250; massacre of the people of Wyoming, 26, 252; their settlements laid waste by the Americans, 252; attack and massacre of Cherry Valley, 253; depredations on the southern frontier, ib.; on the Susquehanna, chastised by General Sullivan, and their villages destroyed, 278–279.

Jackson, Andrew (vol. ii.), early life of, 291; military career, 292; marriage, 294; Tennessee becomes a State, 294; he is elected governor of Tennessee, 296; his challenge of Dickinson, 297; arrest of Aaron

Burr, 297; his engagement with the Creek Indians, 298; his career during the war of 1812, 300; at New Orleans, 317; is appointed commander-in-chief for the South, 310; Florida war, 311; visit of Lafayette, 313; elected President, and his inaugural address, 315; his usurpations, 317; the Twenty-first Congress convened, 321; unexampled prosperity of the country, 321; principal acts passed, 322; sales of the public lands, 323; the nullification question, 324; United States bank and the tariff, 327; violations of the constitution. 329; claims of the United States on France, 332; treaty with Brazil, 335; renomination to Presidency, 339; the census of 1830, 344; United States bank veto, 347; internal improvements bill, 340; reduction of duties, 350; French treaty, 356; treaty with Austria, 357; election to the Presidency, 361; action of the States on the nullification measure, 364; transfer of public funds from United States bank, 366; its commercial effects, 370; new coinage act, 372; internal improvements, 372; distribution of public moneys, 374; the specie circular, 379; review of his administration, 381.

Jay, John, draws up letter of instructions to the colonial agents in England, 132; appointed minister to Spain, 283; commissioner to negotiate for peace, 334.

—, ——, life of, 477.

Jefferson, Thomas, a member of the Virginia Legislature, and a leader of the patriots, 96; member of Continental Congress, and one of a committee to draft a Declaration of Independence, 187; same drawn by him adopted, 188; his narrow escape from capture by the British, while governor of Virginia, 313; appointed commissioner to Europe to negotiate for peace, 334.

———, ———, (vol. ii.), his early life, 110; and mental development, 112; his notes on Virginia, 113; minister to France, 113; his election as President, and re-election, 115; his founding the University of Virginia, 116; sale of his library, 116; his death, 116; his theological opinions, 119; his inauguration, 120; his political creed, 121; the federal party, 123; Rhode Island, 127; Seventh Congress at Washington, 129; revision of the judiciary, 130; apportionment of representation, &c., 130; act regarding the militia, 132; difficulties with Spain about Louisiana, 132; Monroe's mission to France, 134; termination of the treaty, 138; further troubles, 138; treaty ratified by the Senate, 140; naturalization of aliens, 141; bankrupt law repealed, 142; exploring expedition to the Pacific, 142; close of the war with Tripoli, 143; second Presidential term of, 144; interruptions to American commerce by Great Britain, 147; purchase of Florida at Paris, 148; expedition of Col. Burr in the West, 149; treaty with Great Britain, 151; Napoleon's Berlin decree, 155; restrictive measures of the federalists, 156; the embargo law, 158; fortifications at New York, 161; the non-intercourse law, 163; review of the administration of, 166; the non-intercourse law, 167.

Johnson, Sir John, with a large body of Indians, defeats General Herkimer, 224.

Johnson, Sir Wm., leads an expedition against Crown Point and Ticonderoga, 37; erects Fort Wm. Henry, 38.

Jones, Paul, exploits of, 255; commands a squadron fitted out by the American commissioners in France, 279; attacks a British convoy, 280; captures two British ships after a desperate battle, 281–282; receives the thanks of Congress and a gold medal, also the order of merit from the French king, 282.

Judiciary, the, 613.

King George III., his character and his counsellors, 39; recommends taxation of the colonies, 56; his speech on American affairs (1766), 68; his message on Boston tea-riot, 107; his speech declaring the colonies in a state of rebellion, 133; effect of the speech in the colonies, 144; his statue destroyed in New York, 188; his speech on the alliance between France and America, 259.

Knyphausen, General, left by Sir Henry Clinton in command of the British forces at New York, 278; detaches a large body of troops under Gen. Mathews, on an incursion into New Jersey, 297; joins Mathews with Sir Henry Clinton and additional troops, ib.; attacks and defeats General Greene, burns Springfield, and returns to New York, ib.

Kosciusko (Polish General), appointed chief-engineer of the Continental army, 223; accompanies the northern army at Saratoga, ib.; distinguished in the southern campaign, 320.

Ladies, American, patriotism of, 86; in camp at Valley Forge, 239; daughters of loyalists at the Mischianza, Philadelphia, 245.
 Of Fairfield, Connecticut, outrages on, by Governor Tryon, 273; patriotism and exertions of, 296.

La Fayette, Marquis, offers his services to Congress; is accepted, and appointed major-general in the Continental army, 217; meets Washington in Philadelphia, and becomes a member of his military family, ib.; is wounded at the battle of Brandywine, 218; his fidelity to Washington, 240; commands a detachment of the army in Pennsylvania, 246; his skilful manœuvre when attacked, ib.; leads the advance troops at the battle of Monmouth, 247; commands a detachment sent to Rhode Island, 249; challenges Earl Carlisle, one of the British commissioners, for insulting language used towards France, 250; makes a visit to France, 261; success of his mission, and return to America, 296; receives the thanks of Congress, ib.; dispatched by Washington to Virginia, 314; his skilful manœuvres against the British, 322–323.

Laurens, Henry, President of Congress; publication, in Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, of a letter alleged to have been written by him, but supposed to have been forged, and intercepted by the enemy, 285; effects of, on the public mind, ib.; appointed minister to Holland, and captured by the British, 309; released on bail, and afterwards exchanged for Gen. Burgoyne, 328.
 ———, ———, life of, 476.

Laurens, John, appointed special commissioner to France; obtains financial aid for the United States, 313; is killed in an action in South Carolina, 332.

Lee, General Charles, military operations of, at New York, 183; repairs to South Carolina, and defends Charleston, 184; commands part of the army at White Plains, 201; ordered to New Jersey, 202; is surprised and taken prisoner, ib.; British refuse to exchange him, 216; exchanged for Gen. Prescott, and commands a detachment of the army, 246; his conduct at the battle of Monmouth, 247; quarrels with Washington, and addresses him two offensive letters, ib.; arrested, tried, and suspended from command, ib.; leaves the service, and dies at Philadelphia, ib.

Lee, Major (afterwards Colonel), captures fort at Paulus' Hook, 276; exploit and stratagem with Colonel Pyle in North Carolina, 318; joins Gen. Marion, and captures several forts, 319.

Lee, Richard Henry, life of, 479.

Letter of St. Pierre; its tone, 33.
 Of Lord Hillsborough to the colonies, 82.

Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer, 74.
 Of Hutchinson and Oliver, exposed by Franklin, 101.
 Of instructions to colonial agents in England, from Congress, 132.
 Of Admiral Howe, 192, 193.

Letter of General Putnam to Governor Tryon relative to a spy taken by the Americans, 216.

Lexington, battle of, 145; effects of, on the people of the colonies, 147–149.

Liberty, Sons of, societies so called formed in the colonies, 66.

Liberty, sloop, seized at Boston, 75.
 Poles erected in the colonies, 96.

"*Liberty or Death*," patriotic phrase originated with Patrick Henry, 152.

Lighthouses, beacons, &c., 668.

Lincoln, General, surprised by Lord Cornwallis, at Boundbrook, New Jersey, and retreats, 212; joins General Gates at Saratoga, 226; is included in the vote of thanks by Congress, 232; takes command of the army at the South, 267; encamps on the Savannah river, 268; strength of his army in April, 1779, 269; marches to attack Savannah, ib.; apprised of the march of Gen. Prevost, with the British army; he moves towards Charleston, attacks a division at Stony Ferry, and is repulsed, 270; prepares for defence of Charleston, 288; refuses to surrender to the British fleet and army, and they open a destructive fire upon the town, 289; the British prepare for an assault, and the American general and army surrender prisoners of war, 290; exchanged for Gen. Phillips, 309.

London, City of, takes sides with the colonies, 143; petitions the king in their favor, ib.; rebuked by the king, ib.

Long Island, landing of British troops at, 193; battle of, 194; defeat of the Americans, 195; retreat of the Continental army, ib.; destruction of

British vessels and stores at Sag Harbor by Col. Meigs, 214; Major Tallmadge's expedition against Fort George, 308.

Loudon, Lord, appointed British commander-in-chief in America, 38; recalled, 41.

Louisburg, its cost, English expedition against it, flight of the French from it, its surrender, 29; English attempt to capture it, 39.

Lovell's expedition to the Penobscot defeated by the British under Sir George Collier, 276.

Loyalists (see Tories).

Madison, James (vol. ii.), his early days, 173; debates on the constitution, 174; his letter to Washington on the subject, 175; is elected member of the new Congress, 176; his marriage, 176; his papers on foreign commerce, 177; is appointed secretary of state, ib.; his retirement from public life, 178; his death, ib.; administration of, inaugurated, 179; the non-intercourse act modified, ib.; declaration of war 1812, 181; commercial controversy with Great Britain, 182; Louisiana admitted into the Union, 183; Henry Clay elected speaker of the House of Representatives, 184; augmentation of the army, 185; John Henry, the British spy, 188; his mission to England, and its failure, 189; important acts regulating commerce and internal affairs, 191; declaration of war with England, ib.; reelection as President, 194; convention of the Federalists, 195; repeal of the orders in council, 195; military and naval engagements, 198; direct negotiations for peace, 200; Gallatin, secretary of treasury, 201; commercial difficulties, 204; the "Hartford Convention," 207; meeting of the commissioners at Ghent, 209; rejection of their proposals, 210; action of Congress respecting militia, 211; cost of the war, 213; miscellaneous acts of Congress, 217; survey of the public lands, 220.

McCrea, Miss, murder of, by Indians, 223.

McKean, Thomas, life of, 478.

Marion, Gen., a partisan leader, wounded at the siege of Charleston, 294; performs signal services in the campaigns at the South, ib.; joined by Lee; they capture Fort Watson, Fort Motte, and Fort Granby, 319; Georgetown, 320; exploits and anecdotes of, ib.

Massachusetts, Colonial Assembly of, invite a congress at New York in 1765, 62; take a bold stand against acts of Parliament respecting taxation, 74; Assembly dissolved by the governor, 75; provincial convention formed, 77; people and legislature declared guilty of treasonable acts by Parliament, 79; charter altered by act of Parliament, 111; action of General Assembly, 117, 118; secret conference of members, ib.; recommend a general Congress, ib.; appoint delegates, and are dissolved by the governor, ib.; "Solemn League and Covenant" adopted, ib.; denounced by General Gage, 119; state of public feeling in 1774, 120; people prepare for war, 110; Provincial Congress formed, 122; their resolutions, ib.; Assembly resolve themselves into a Provincial Congress, 130; enroll militia as minute men, 131; resolve to purchase munitions of war, 144; address the English people on the battle of Lexington, 147; organize an army, ib.; issue paper money, ib.

Mecklenburg, Declaration of Independence at, May, 1775, 149.

Meigs, Colonel, gallant expedition of, to Long Island, 214; Congress presents him with a sword, ib.

Mercer, General, killed at the battle of Princeton, 210.

Middleton, Henry, life of, 475.

Mifflin, Thomas, life of, 479.

Military Divisions, 642.

Military Establishments, 618.

Military Force of the United States, 645.

Ministers of the United States to foreign countries from 1789 to 1854, 560–567.

Ministers from France to the United States, 248, 283.

Ministers to Great Britain and Spain appointed by Congress, 283; to Holland, 309.

Mint, the, at Philadelphia, 671.

Minute-men enrolled in New England, 131.

Mischianza, entertainment given to Gen. Howe and Admiral Howe, at Philadelphia, on taking leave, description of, 245.

Monmouth, battle of, 247.

Monroe, James (vol. ii.), his birth and parentage, 223; his early military services, 224; is member of legislative councils of Virginia, ib.; changes in articles of confederacy, 225; elected governor of Virginia, 227; measures for restoring public credit, 229; survey of canals and roads, 229; elected President, ib.; re-elected President, 230; his death, ib.; administration of, Jackson's letter to, 235; repeal of domestic duties, 237; internal improvements, 238; treaty with Sweden, 239; Alabama formed into a State, 240; convention with Great Britain, 240; commercial treaty with France, 248.

Montcalm, commander of the French force in Canada—crosses Lake Erie with 5,000 men—captures Fort Ontario at Oswego—returns to Canada—collects his force at Ticonderoga—captures Fort William Henry, 39; defends Ticonderoga—siege raised, 41; prepares to attack the British, 44; his death at Quebec, 45.

Montgomery, General, commands expedition to Canada, 165; captures Fort Chambly, 166; St. John's, ib.: Montreal, ib.; joins Arnold, and attacks Quebec, 168; is killed, and his army defeated, ib.

Montreal, defended by De Callières, 28; surrendered to the English, 46; taken by the Americans under Montgomery, 166.

Morgan, General, defeats the British at the Cowpens, 315; receives a medal from Congress, 316.

Morris, Robert, Treasurer of the United States—his important financial operations and patriotic services, 313.

Morristown, N. J., Continental troops encamp at, 211, 282.

Mutiny of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey troops, in 1781, quelled by Washington and Wayne, 312, 313.

National Armories, 641.

National Observatory, the, 694.

Naval Academy at Annapolis, 657.

Naval Asylum, Philadelphia, 655.

Naval battle on Lake Champlain, 205.

Naval Establishment, 645

Naval Hospitals, 656.

Navy, American, commencement of, 181; condition and operations of, 254, 255; action between the American ship *Randolph* and British ship *Yarmouth*, and destruction of the former, 255; operations of Paul Jones, ib.; notice of various operations, 329.

Navy, British, strength of, in 1778, 254.

Navy Department, the, 691.

Navy-yards of the United States, 651.

New Haven, Conn., entered by the British under Tryon, 273; after various outrages, the enemy retire, without burning the town, ib.

New Jersey, patriotic proceedings of the people, 149; overrun by British troops, 200; by the American army, 211; evacuated by the British, 215.

New London, Conn., attack of, intended by Sir Henry Clinton, prevented by a storm, 263; again threatened by Governor Tryon, but saved by his recall, 273; burned by Arnold, 324.

Newport, R. I., siege of, by the Americans, 249; abandonment of the siege, and retreat of Gen. Sullivan, ib.

New York, committee of the Assembly of, propose a Colonial Congress in 1765, 62; violent opposition to the Stamp Act by the people—mobs and riots, 65; Assembly refuse to enforce Mutiny Act, 72; prohibited by act of Parliament from passing laws, until obedient to the Mutiny Act, 73; people of, send remonstrance to Parliament against taxation, 80; violate non-importation agreements, 95; tea not permitted to be landed, 105; Assembly refuse to appoint delegates to the Congress of 1774, 124; delegates appointed by town meetings, ib.; refuses to adopt the resolution of Congress respecting commerce, 129; makes common cause with the colonies after the battle of Lexington, 148; many of the people royalists, 170; Tryon, royal governor, ib.; Rivington's (tory) press destroyed, 171; Continental army under Washington arrive at, 183; statue of George III. destroyed, 188; evacuated by the American army, 198; British army takes possession, ib.; great fire destroys about one-third of the city, 199.

New York Navy-yard, 653.

New York Custom-house, 667.

Non-Importation Agreement, adopted, 66, 74, 78; effects of, in England, 82.

North Carolina, early movements in, against British authority, 97; organization of the Regulators, ib.; action of the Regulators with British troops in 1771, 98; movements of the people in 1775, 149; Provincial Congress convened, ib.; Committees of Safety appointed, ib.; independence declared at Mecklenburg, ib.; military operations in, 183; campaign in 1780, 77, 315–324.

North, Lord, proposes to reject the New York remonstrance, 80; moves in Parliament for repeal of duties in part, retaining the tax on tea, 94; proposes to make governors and judges of the colonies independent of the people, 100; offers a resolution in Parliament permitting the export of tea to America free of export duty, 102; other measures proposed by him, 109, 111, 112; proposes further coercive measures, 140, 141, 174; introduces a conciliatory plan, 142; makes concessions in favor of America, 242; moves an address to the King on the treaty between France and America, 259; resigns after the battle of Yorktown, and other disasters in America, 333.

Norfolk Navy-yard, 652.

Norwalk (*Conn.*), burned by Governor Tryon, 273.

Ohio Company, its character—grant from the crown—French jealousy of it—appeal to Virginia for protection, 31; send around men to erect a fort—secure aid from Virginia and Carolina—their fort destroyed, 33.

Oliver, Andrew, stamp-master at Boston, attacked by a mob, and burned in effigy, 64; resigns his office, 65; his letters exposed by Dr. Franklin, 101; Assembly of Massachusetts petition for his removal as lieutenant-governor, 102.

Oliver, Peter, chief-justice of Massachusetts (brother of Andrew), replies to the queries of the Assembly, who demand his removal from office, 115; the governor refuses to remove him, and the Assembly resolve to impeach the chief-justice, ib.

Otis, James, member of the Congress of 1765, 64; one of a committee to wait on Governor Bernard, 76.

Paine, Thomas, secretary of Congress for foreign affairs, 284; makes charges against Silas Deane, ib.; cited to appear at the bar of Congress, ib.; resigns his office, ib.

Paoli, battle of, 219.

Paper money issued by Massachusetts Provincial Congress, 147; by Continental Congress, 157, 266; depreciation of, 266.

Parker, Admiral, arrives off the coast of Carolina, 183; his unsuccessful attack on the fort near Charleston, 184; takes Rhode Island, 204.

Party names applied in the colonies, 130; spirit in the Continental Congress, 283.

Pay, &c., of army officers, 644.

—— of the navy, 659.

Paulus' Hook, fort at, captured by Americans under Major Lee of Virginia, 276.

Peace, of 1697, between England and France, 28; of Utrecht, and its terms, thirty years between England and France, 29; treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 30; treaty of Paris, 46; people of England anxious for, in 1782, 333; preliminary negotiations for a general peace in Europe and America, 334; treaty of, signed and ratified, 335.

Peekskill, capture of military stores at, 212.

Penitentiary and Hospital for Insane, 696.

Penn, William, heirs of, protest against the Canada Boundary bill, 115.

Pennsylvania Convention appoints delegates to Congress with instructions (1774), 123.

Penobscot, failure of Gen. Lovell's expedition to, 276.

Pensacola Navy-yard, 654.

Philadelphia, citizens of, oppose Stamp Act, 67, 68; tea not permitted to be landed, 105; British army under Gen. Howe take possession of, 219; conduct of British troops at, 245, 246; departure of Gen. Howe, and fête given him by his officers, 245; Sir Henry Clinton takes command, ib.; British army evacuate the city, 246; American army, under Gen. Arnold, take possession, ib.

Philadelphia Navy-yard, 653.

Phillips, General, taken prisoner at the surrender of Burgoyne—exchanged for Gen. Lincoln, 309; sent by Clinton to join Arnold in Virginia, 314; their joint operations, ib.; his death at Petersburg, 322.

Pierce, Franklin (vol. ii.), biographical sketch of, 627; member of Congress, 635; military services in Mexico, 645–648; election to the Presidency, 651; inauguration, 652.

Pitt, William, made prime minister, 40; contemplates the conquest of Canada—assigns an active part to Wolfe, 41; his course on the Stamp Act, 56; takes the part of the Americans, 68; replies to Grenville, 69; proposes a repeal of the Stamp Act, ib.; created Earl of Chatham, 72; curious cabinet formed by him, ib. (*See* Chatham.)

Polk, James K. (vol. ii.), early life of, 501; representative to Congress, 503; re-elected member of Congress, 505; chosen Speaker of House of Representatives, 505; governor of Tennessee, 507; elected President, 508 administration of, 511; inaugural ceremonies, 511; annexation of Texas, 513; difficulties between the

United States and Mexico, 514; declaration of war with Mexico, 517; settlement of the Northwestern Boundary question, 518; review of his administration, 528.
Population of the United States for fifty years, 569.
Portsmouth Navy-yard, 652.
Post Office, the, 614.
Post-Office Department at Washington, 692.
Predatory expeditions of the British, 232, 233, 249, 271, 272.
Prescott, Col., commands Americans at Bunker Hill, 159.
Prescott, Major-General, of the British army, captured at Rhode Island by Colonel Barton, 216; exchanged for General Lee, 246.
President's House, the, 688.
Presidents of the Continental Congress, 506.
Presidents and *Vice-Presidents*, votes for, from 1789 to 1849, 547.
Presidents of the Senate, 556.
Prevost, General, commands the British army at the South 268; his various operations, 268, 269; re-organizes the government of Georgia, ib.; attacks and defeats General Moultrie, ib.; plans an attack upon Charleston, 270; summons the town to surrender, ib.; withdraws his troops, and moves towards Savannah, ib.; successfully defends the city of Savannah against an attack by the Americans and French, 277.
Princeton, battle of, 210.
Privateers, American, enterprise and numbers of, 172; successful exploits of, 172, 255.
Privateers, British, authorized against Americans by "Letters of Marque," issued by act of Parliament, 212.
Proceedings of commissioners at Annapolis, 498.
Providence, R. I., people of, destroy the British revenue schooner *Gaspee*, 99.
Provincial Convention formed in Massachusetts, 77.
  Congress formed in same colony, 122.
  Congresses and assemblies of the colonies approve of the proceedings of Congress of 1774, 129.
  Congress of Massachusetts enroll militia, 131; invite other colonies to join them, ib.
  Congresses and assemblies formed throughout the colonies, 131.
Public property of the United States, 609.
Public lands, the, 609.
Pulaski, Count, distinguished in the battle of Brandywine, and made a brigadier-general, 218; acts with General Moultrie at the South, 269, 270; killed while charging a British force at the attack on Savannah, 278; Congress erect a monument to his memory at Savannah, ib.
Putnam, Israel, commands a corps of Connecticut troops, 147; appointed major-general in the Continental army, 158; one of the commanders at Bunker Hill, 160; at the battle of Long Island, 193; at the retreat from New York, 198; takes command at Philadelphia, 202; stationed on the highlands of the Hudson river, 216; a spy (Lieut. Palmer, of the British army) taken in his camp, and executed by his order, ib.; his letter to Gov. Tryon on the subject, ib.; commands troops at Danbury, Conn., 275; his daring feat at West Greenwich, ib.

Quebec, expedition against, 1629—captured—its restoration to France—second English expedition against it, 27; defended by Frontenac—third English expedition against it—its failure, 28; strongly fortified, 42; surrendered to the English, 45; change in laws for the government of, 114; attacked by Montgomery and Arnold, 167; successfully defended by the garrison, 168.
Quincy, Josiah, his remarks at the Boston town meeting, 1773, 104.

Randolph, American frigate (Captain Biddle), engages the British ship *Yarmouth*, and is destroyed, 255.
Randolph, Peyton, life of, 475.
Rawdon, Lord, commands a division of the British army at the South, 292; is joined by Cornwallis, and they defeat General Gates at Sanders' Creek, ib.; engages General Greene near Camden, 319; burns Camden, and retreats to the South, ib.; raises the siege of Ninety-Six, 320; retires to Eutaw Springs, resigns his command to Col. Stewart, and returns to England, 321.
Recruiting stations, 643.
Red Bank Fort (on the Delaware), attacked by the Hessians, who are repulsed by the Americans, 219; Lord Cornwallis marches against it, and the Americans retreat, ib.
Refugees (*see* Tories).
Regulators, origin and organization of, in North Carolina, 97; action with Tryon's troops, 1771, 98.
Reidesel, Baroness, her account of the surrender of Gen. Burgoyne, 229.

Revolt of part of the Continental army quelled, 312, 313.

Revolution in the colonies assumes a distinct form in 1774, 131; further movements in 1775, 156; conclusion of, 347.

Revolutionary writers, 348.

Rhode Island, people of, burn the British revenue schooner *Gaspee*, 99; British take possession of the islands of Rhode Island, Conanicut, and Prudence, 204; siege of Newport by the Americans, 249; battle of, ib.; evacuated by the British, 277.

Ridgefield, battle of, 212.

Rivington, James (King's printer), his press destroyed by Americans under Capt. Sears, 171; his press re-established, 285; publishes a letter alleged to have been written by Mr. Laurens, President of Congress, charging members with corruption, ib.

Rochambeau, Count de, commander of the French army, arrives at Newport, 297; meets Washington in conference at Hartford, 298; they proceed in company to Virginia, 324; siege of Yorktown, and surrender of Cornwallis, 325, 326; the count receives a special vote of thanks from Congress, 326; returns to France, 469.

Rockingham, Marquis of, premier, 67; cabinet dissolved, 72; premier again in 1782, 333; dies, and is succeeded by Shelburne, 334.

Roebuck, Dr., employed by British ministers to counteract Dr. Franklin, 133; procures petitions from the people in favor of ministers, 134.

Royalists (*see* Tories).

Sag Harbor, L. I., destruction of British vessels and stores at, by Col. Meigs, 214.

St. Leger, Colonel, sends an expedition against Fort Schuyler, on the Mohawk, 222; his defeat and final retreat, 224, 225.

Savannah, battle of, and defeat of the Americans, 254; is taken by the British troops under Col. Campbell, ib.; attacked by the French and Americans, and successfully defended by Gen. Prevost, 277.

Schuyler, Gen., commands the northern army, 205; commands the forces to oppose Gen. Burgoyne, 223; evacuates Fort Edward, and retreats towards the Hudson, ib.; his army increased, ib.; is succeeded in the chief command by Gen. Gates, 225; his humanity and kind treatment of the British prisoners, 229.

Schuyler, Fort, siege of, by Colonel St. Leger, 224; gallant defence of, by Colonel Gansevoort, and retreat of St. Leger, 225.

Sears, Captain Isaac, destroys Rivington's printing press at New York, 171; seizes Rev. Mr. Seabury and other clergymen of the Church of England, ib.

Slaves, great numbers captured by the British, 271, 323.

Smith, Adam, endeavors to counteract Dr. Franklin's movements in England, 133.

Smithsonian Institute, the, 694.

Sons of Liberty, origin of societies of, 66; name given to patriots by Colonel Barré, 91.

South Carolina, effect of the battle of Lexington and acts of Parliament on the people, 149; vigorous measures adopted by, ib.; Provincial Congress convoked, ib.; bills of credit emitted, ib.; campaign in 1780–81, 315–322. (*See* Charleston, Clinton, Cornwallis, and Greene.)

Spain joins France against England, 276; her pecuniary aid to the United States, 313.

Springfield, N. J., battle at, 297; burned by the British, ib.

Stamp Act, proposed by Grenville, 53; opposed by Colonel Barré, 57; passage of, 58; reception of, in America, ib.; mobs and riots on account of, 64, 65; discussion on, in Parliament, 68–70; repealed, 70; rejoicings on account of repeal, in England and America, ib.

Stark, General, defeats the British under Col. Baum, at Bennington, 224.

St. Clair, Arthur, life of, 480.

Steuben, Baron, arrives in the United States, and tenders his services to Congress, 235; succeeds Gen. Conway as Inspector-General, and introduces a system of tactics and discipline into the army, 240.

Stirling, General Lord, commands part of the American troops on Long Island, 194; gallantry of his command in that battle, ib.; is defeated and taken prisoner, 195; at the battle of Trenton, 203; is defeated by Cornwallis, near Middlebrook, 215; joins Putnam on the Hudson river, 216; attempts an attack upon Staten Island, but is compelled to retreat, 295.

Stony Point, fort at, taken by the British, 272; stormed and recaptured by the Americans under Wayne, 274; abandoned by Wayne, and again garrisoned by the British, 275; is evacuated by the British, 277.

Sullivan, John, appointed brigadier-general, 159; commands a division of the army on Long Island, 194; is defeated and taken prisoner at the battle of Long Island, 194–195; is parolled, and sent by Lord Howe with a message to Congress, 196; is exchanged, and succeeds General Charles Lee in command, 202; at the battle of Trenton, 203; is ordered to cross the Hudson, and encamp near Peekskill, 216; commands the right wing of the army at the battle of Brandywine, 218; is attacked by Cornwallis, and compelled to retreat, ib.; his expedition against the British troops at Rhode Island, 249; battle of Rhode Island, ib.; his admirable retreat, ib.; commands an expedition against the hostile Indians on the Susquehanna, 278; burns their villages, and compels them to retreat to the wilderness, 279.

Sumter, Colonel, a partisan leader at the South, attacks the British regulars and tories at Rocky Mount, and is repulsed, 291; defeats them at Hanging Rock, ib.; after a successful attack on the Wateree, he is defeated by Colonel Tarleton, 293; created brigadier-general, collects a band of volunteers, and again harasses the British army, 294; defeats Major Wemys at Broad river, and Col. Tarleton at Blackstock, 295.

Supreme Court of the United States since 1789, 555.

Tallmage, Major, his gallant enterprise against Fort George—on Long Island, 308.

Tarleton, Colonel, defeats and cuts to pieces a body of Americans in Carolina, 291; charges and disperses American troops with great slaughter at Sanders' Creek, 292; his operations checked by Marion, 294; defeated by Morgan at the Cowpens, pursued by Col. W. Washington, 315.

Taxes, on the colonies, proposed by Grenville, 53; right of imposing asserted by colonies, 55; recommended by George III., 56; Stamp Act passed, 58; repealed, 70; new law proposed and passed, 73; resisted by the colonies, 74.

Taylor, Zachary (vol. ii.), early history of, 531; first military services, 533; the Mexican war, 543–559; elected President, 563; last hours of, 567; administration of, 569; inauguration as President, 570; settlement of Texas claims and boundaries, 580; admission of California, 580; summary of his career, 591.

Tea, duties on, imposed by Parliament, 73; retained in 1769, 82; exports of, to the colonies from England, ib.; importers of, unpopular, 87; Parliament refuse to repeal duty on, 95; export duty on shipments to America removed, 103; arrival of cargoes at Boston, ib.; people of Boston resolve that it shall not be landed, ib.; destruction of, in Boston harbor, 105; not permitted to be sold elsewhere, ib.

Thomson, Charles, life of, 481.

Ticonderoga, is strengthened by the French, 38; attacked by Abercrombie, 40; expedition against, planned, 153; taken by Allen and Arnold, ib.; invested and taken by General Burgoyne, 222; attacked by the Americans, who are repulsed, 226.

Townshend, Charles, supports the Stamp Act, 57; chancellor of exchequer in the Earl of Chatham's cabinet, 72; proposes a new scheme for taxing the colonies, which is carried in Parliament, 73; death of, 79.

Tories, or *Royalists*, conduct of, 191; their loyalty checked by the conduct of British and Hessian troops, 211; a detachment of, under Gov. Tryon, destroy Continental village, Westchester, with barracks and military stores, 232; operations of (with Indian allies) in the valley of Wyoming, 251; also at Cherry Valley, 253; depredations on the southern frontier, ib.; great numbers of, join the British army at the South, 268; increasing number of, in 1780, at the South, 288.

Tory, appellation of, to the colonial royalists, 130; origin of the term, ib.; families leave Boston with General Howe, 182.

Treason of Arnold, 298.

Treasury Department, the, 690.

Treaty, of neutrality with the Indians, 41; of Paris, its conditions, 46; of alliance between France and America, 234; between France and Spain, 276; of peace, between United States and Great Britain, signed and ratified, 335.

Trenton, battle of, 203, 204; reception of Washington at, 344.

Troops, British, land near Quebec, 42; cross the St. Lawrence—their critical situation, 43; glide down the St. Lawrence—ascend the heights of Abraham, 44; British, arrive in Boston, 76; additional, sent from England, 141, 159, 175; German, or Hessians employed, 175; British, evacuate Boston, 182; arrive off Sandy Hook, 191; land on Long Island, 194; enter city of New York, 198. (*See* Army.)

Tryon, governor of North Carolina, his tyrannical character and practices, 97; leads his troops against the regulators, 98; his cruelty towards prisoners, ib.

Tryon, governor of New York, operations of, 170; his plan to take Washington prisoner, 191; takes refuge in the ship *Asia*, 212; commands an expedition to Connecticut, ib.; burns Danbury, 213; attacked by Americans under Wooster and Arnold, and retreats, ib.; destroys Continental village, 232; his second predatory expedition to Connecticut, 272; burns Fairfield and Norwalk, 273.

Tyler, John (vol. ii.), memoir of, 445; re-elected to Congress, 449; Clay's compromise act, 454; nomination for Vice-President, 460; his administration as President, 463; political parties in the United States, 466; projected national bank, 471; fiscal corporation bill, 474; appointments to offices, 489; trial of McLeod, 489; new tariff law, 490; explosion of the United States steamer *Princeton*, 493; annexation of Texas, 493; review of his administration, 498.

United States, name adopted by Congress, 188.

Valley Forge, encampment of Americans at, 220; sufferings of the army at, 237, 238; number encamped at, 251; march of the army from, 245, 246.

Van Buren, Martin (vol. ii.), his early career, 385; his public life, 390; leader of the democratic party of New York, 392; opposition of Clinton, 393; elected to the New York convention, 394; his safety-fund system, 396; inaugurated President, 398; derangement of the currency, 402; efforts to rescind the specie circular, 403; the sub-treasury scheme, 404; abolition of imprisonment for debt, 408; Clay's nomination for President, 410; election of Harrison and Tyler, 413.

Vergennes, Count de, prime minister of France, negotiates a treaty of alliance with the United States, 235; his talents and character, ib.

Verplank's Point, Fort La Fayette at, captured by the British, 272; unsuccessfully attacked by Wayne, 275; evacuated by the British, 277.

Vessels of war of the United States, 658.

Virginia, opposes the Stamp Act, 58, 67; sympathizes with Massachusetts, 96; house of burgesses petition the King, ib.; recommend committees of correspondence, adopting resolutions of Dabney Carr, 100; effect of the Boston port bill on public mind in, 116; fast day appointed by burgesses, ib.; Assembly dissolved by Lord Dunmore, 117; members organize an association, ib.; recommend a general Congress, ib.; Provincial Congress convened, 151; recommends a volunteer corps, ib; speech of Patrick Henry, ib.; British expedition against, 244.

Walpole, Horace, indifferent on American affairs, 57.

War, declared between France and England, 27; declared by England against France—Queen Anne's, 28; between England and France—its origin, 29; formally declared between England and France—vigorous preparations, 38; end of the "seven years," 46; preparations for, in the colonies, in 1774, 120; commences in earnest, 147; between France and England, 242; between Spain and England, 276; between Holland and England, 310; conclusion, and general peace, 334.

War Department, the, 691.

Warren, Commodore, joins the expedition against Louisburg, 29.

Warren, Joseph, appointed major-general, 160; killed at battle of Bunker Hill, 162.

Washington, George, appointed a commissioner—expedition to the French forts—his reception—his return to Williamsburgh, 32; made colonel—placed in command of troops—events and results of his expedition, 33; enters the army under Braddock, 35; his bravery and preservation at Braddock's defeat, 36; leaves the service, 37; member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, 78; appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental army, 158; appeals to Congress on the state of the army, 172; reorganizes the army, ib.; accepts General Howe's terms of proposal to quit Boston, 181; enters Boston with the Continental army, 182; marches the army to New York—his army defeated on Long Island—

retreats to New York, 195; retires to the heights near White Plains, 200; his defeat, ib.; crosses the Hudson, and retreats through New Jersey before the British army, ib.; crosses the Delaware to Pennsylvania, 201; appointed military dictator by Congress, 203; crosses the Delaware, and captures a body of Hessians at Trenton, ib., 204; successful stratagem of, and battle of Princeton, 210; retreats to Morristown, where he establishes his head-quarters, 211; breaks up his encampment at Morristown, and marches to Middlebrook, near the British head-quarters, at New Brunswick—confers with Congress, 217; meets La Fayette, who becomes a member of his military family, ib.; marches to the Brandywine—is defeated, and retreats to Philadelphia, 218; attacks the British camp at Germantown, and is defeated, after a severe action, 219, 220; is attacked at Whitemarsh by General Howe (who, after a few skirmishes, falls back upon Philadelphia), 220; sends La Fayette with a detachment to watch the movements of the enemy, 246; engages them at Monmouth Court-House, 247; crosses the Hudson to White Plains—sends troops against the Indians on the Susquehanna, 252; confers with Congress on plans for the campaign of 1779, 265; sends General Wayne to attack Stony Point, 274; orders Major Lee to attempt the capture of the British fort at Paulus' Hook, 276; goes into winter quarters at Morristown, 282; sends a reinforcement to Gen. Lincoln at the South, ib.; demands and obtains a supply of provisions for his army from the people of New Jersey, 283; sends a large force to the Carolinas, 292; appoints Gen. Greene to supersede Gen. Gates in command of the southern army, 295; expresses to Congress great confidence in Gen. Greene, ib.; receives commissions of lieut.-general and vice-admiral from Louis XVI., 296; sends a detachment from Morristown, under Gen. Greene, to meet the British army in New Jersey, 297; meditates an attack upon New York, ib.; meets Rochambeau (French general), at Hartford, Conn., 298; André's design for capturing him and his staff, 303; discovery of the treason of Arnold, 307; conduct of Washington on that occasion, ib.; appeals to Congress for more troops and longer enlistments, 309; failure of his attempt to capture Arnold in Virginia, 314; holds a conference with the French officers in Connecticut, and forms a junction of the American and French armies on the Hudson, 323; prepares to attack New York, ib.; advances to a position near the city, but changes his plan, and the combined armies march for Virginia, 324; precedes the army with De Rochambeau, and arrives at La Fayette's head-quarters at Williamsburg, ib.; receives the surrender of Cornwallis and the British army at Yorktown, 326; endeavors, in vain, to induce Count de Grasse to aid in the reduction of Charleston, 327; adopts vigilant measures for the campaign of 1782—establishes his head-quarters at Newburg, N. Y., 332; his humane conduct in the case of Capt. Asgill, ib.; discontent of the army after the conclusion of peace, and a monarchy proposed to Washington, 336; his reply and rebuke, ib.; his prudence and influence induce the soldiers to disband quietly, 337; his farewell address to the army, 338; resigns to Congress his commission as commander-in-chief, 339; elected a delegate to the convention to form a constitution for the United States, and chosen president of that body, 343; elected President of the United States, 344; his progress to New York, ib.; his inauguration, 347.

————, ———— (vol. ii.), birth of, 10–11; early characteristics, 11; early military life, 12; he joins General Braddock's expedition, 13; his marriage, 14; his retirement at Mount Vernon, 15; becomes a member of the Virginia Legislature, 16; appointed delegate to the Continental Congress, 21; elected commander-in-chief, 21; events of the war, 23–36; brilliant exploits in the middle States, 37; capitulation of Burgoyne, 46; unites with La Fayette, 50; events of 1782–3, 57; he retires from the army, 59; his appointment to the Presidency, 62; his inauguration, 66; first Congress at New York, 68; war with the British, 72; political relations with France, 77; rise of the two political parties, 78; adjustment of disputes with foreign powers, 79; his farewell address, 81.

Washington, Col. W., commands a body of cavalry under Gen. Morgan, 315; defeats and pursues Col. Tarleton at the battle of the Cowpens, ib.; is presented with a medal by Congress, 316.

Washington Navy-yard, 654.

Wayne, General, his gallantry at the battle of Brandywine, 218; is surprised and defeated at Paoli, 219; commands a division of the army on marching from Valley Forge, 246; leads the attack at the battle of Monmouth, 247; storms and captures Stony Point fort, 274; receives the thanks of Congress and a medal, 275; letter to him from Dr. Rush, ib.; joins La Fayette in Virginia, 322; his skilful attack on the British, and retreat, 323; is sent by Gen. Greene into Georgia, and defeats the British in several actions, 332.

West Point, fortress at, strength and importance of, 300; General Arnold appointed to the command of, ib.; negotiations of Arnold with Sir Henry Clinton to surrender to the British, ib.; failure of the scheme, 304.

West Point Military Academy, 636.

Whig, party name of, applied to patriots, 130; origin of the name, ib.

Wilkes, John, takes part in favor of the colonies, 147.

Wolfe, General, at the siege of Louisburg, 40; his campaign on the St. Lawrence, 42; takes possession of Point Levi—erects batteries—besieges Quebec, and resolves on an assault—his desponding letter to Pitt, 43; effect of his letter—determines to scale the heights of Abraham, 44; his death at Quebec, 45.

Wooster, General, commands the American troops in Fairfield county, Conn., 213; is killed at the battle of Ridgefield, ib.

Wyoming Valley, massacre of the people of, by tories and Indians, 251.

Yorktown, Cornwallis and the British army encamp at, and fortify, 323; invested by the combined American and French armies, 325; surrender of Cornwallis, 326; Congress resolves to erect a marble column at, ib.

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